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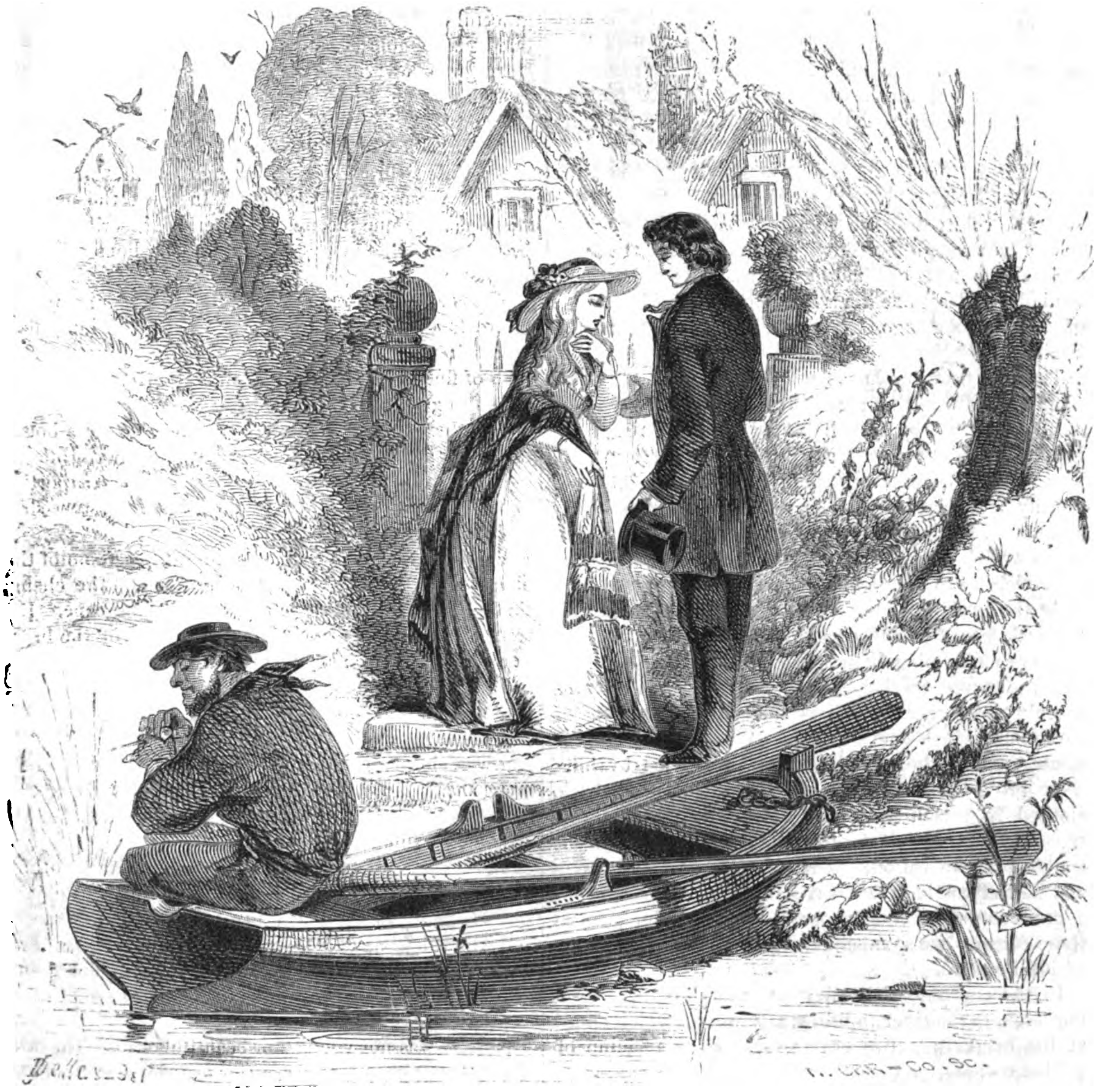
JULY 1856.



LOST JEWELS.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

CHAPTER I.—THE OLD MANSION HOUSE.

It was autumn, and one of those balmy, Indian-Summer days that, if the eyes were closed, would remind one of Andalusia, when the orange trees put forth blossoms with the matured fruit still clinging to their boughs, burying its golden ripeness among cool, green leaves and buds of fragrant snow. Still, save in the delicious atmosphere, that autumnal sunset should not have reminded you of any land but our own; for what

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other climate ever gave to the white wings of the frost the power to scatter that rich combination of red, green, gold and dusky purple upon a thousand forests in a single night? What other land ever saw the sun go down upon a world of green foliage, and rise to find the same foliage bathed in a sea of brilliant tints, till the east was paled by its gorgeousness?

Indeed, there was nothing in this calm, Indian-summer twilight to remind you of any other land, save its stillness and the balm of dying flowers giving up their lives to the frost. But the links of association are rapid and mysterious, and the scenes that awaken a reminiscence are sometimes entirely opposite to the memory awakened.

Be this as it may, there was something in the landscape suddenly clad in its gorgeous fall tints—in the river so coldly transparent twelve hours before, now rolling on through the glowing shadows as if the sands and pebbles in its bed had been turned to jewels, which reminded at least one inmate of that old mansion house, of scenes long ago experienced in the south of Spain.

The old mansion house which we speak of, stood some miles above that gorge in the Harlem River which is now spanned by the High Bridge. This region of Manhattan Island is even yet more than half buried in its primeval forest trees. Hills as abrupt, and moss as greenly fleecy as if found on the crags of the Rocky Mountains, still exist among the wild nooks and wilder peaks which strike the eye more picturesquely from their vicinity to the great metropolis.

At the particular spot we wish to describe, the hills fall back from the Hudson, north and south, far enough to leave a charming little valley of some two or three hundred acres cradled in their wildness and opening greenly to the river, which is sure to catch a sheaf of sunbeams in its bosom when the day fires its last golden salute from behind the Palisades. Sheltered by hills, some broken into cliffs, some rolling smoothly back, clothed in variously tinted undergrowth and fine old trees, the valley itself received a double charm from the contrast of cultivation. It was entirely cleared of trees and undergrowth, save where a clump of cool hemlocks, a grove of sugar maples, or a drooping elm gave it those features we so much admire in the country homes of old England.

In the centre of the valley was a swell of land sloping down to the river in full, grassy waves, which ended at the brink in a tiny cove overhung by a clump of golden willows.

Crowning the swell of this elevation stood the old mansion commanding a fine view of the river, with a glimpse of the opposite shore, where the Weehawken hills begin to consolidate into the Palisades. A score of picturesque and pleasant little nooks were visible from the numerous windows, for it was an irregular old place, varying as much as an American house can vary in its style of architecture. The original idea had undoubtedly sprung from our Knickerbocker ancestors, for the gables were not only pointed, but notched down the steep edges after a semi-battlemented fashion, while stacks of quaint chimneys and heavy oaken doors bespoke a foundation far antecedent to the revolution.

But in addition to these proofs of antiquity were balconies of carved stone, curving over modern bay windows, which broke up the stiff uniformity of the original design; and along one tall gable that fronted on the river, French windows, glittering with plate glass, opened to a veranda of stone-work, surmounted with a graceful design in iron; and if these windows were not one blaze of gold at sunset, you might be certain that a storm was lowering over the Palisades, and that the next day would be a cloudy one.

Another gable facing the south was lighted by a broad arched window crowded full of diamond-shaped glass, tinted through and through by the bloom and glow of a conservatory within. In short the mansion was a picturesque incongruity utterly indescribable, and yet one of the most interesting old houses in the world.

Whatever might be said of its architecture, it certainly had a most aristocratic appearance, and bore proofs in every line and curve of its stone traceries, both of fine taste and great wealth, inherited from generation to generation. Time itself would have failed to sweep these traces of family pride from the old house, for every generation had carved it deeper and deeper into the massive stone, and it was as much a portion of the scenery, as the stately old forest trees that sheltered it.

But we have alluded to one who sat in a room of this old mansion, looking thoughtfully out upon the change that a single night had left upon the landscape. Her seat, a crimson easy-chair, stood near one of the broad bay windows we have mentioned. The sashes were folded back, and she looked dreamily out upon the river and the opposite shore. The whole view was bathed in a subdued glow of crimson and golden purple; for the sun was sinking behind the Palisades, and shot sheaf after sheaf of flashing arrows across the river, that melted into a soft glowing haze before they reached the apartment which she occupied.

The room behind was full of shadows, and nothing but the light of a hickory-wood fire revealed the objects it contained. She was looking forth upon the sunset, and yet thinking of other countries and scenes long gone by. Her mind had seized upon the salient points of a history full of experience, and she was swept away into the past.

No, she was not young, nor beautiful even. The flush of youth was gone for ever. Her features were thoughtful, almost severe, her form stately and mature.

No, she was not beautiful. At her age that were impossible, and yet she was a woman to fix the attention at a glance, and keep herself in the memory for ever—a grand, noble woman, with honor and strength, and beautiful depths of character, apparent even in her thoughtful repose.

But this woman shakes off the reverie that has held her so long in thrall, and looks up at the sound of a voice within the room, blushing guiltily like a young girl aroused from her first love thoughts. She casts aside the remembrance of black fruited olive groves and orange trees sheeted with snowy fragrance, and knows of a truth that she is at home surrounded by the gorgeous woods of America, in the clear chill air inhaled with the first breath of her life.

"Did you speak, James?"

She turned quietly and looked within the room. Near her, sitting with his elbows on a small table and his broad forehead buried in the palms of his hands, sat a man of an age and presence that might have befitted the husband of a woman, at once so gentle and so proud as the one who spoke to him; for even in the light produced by the gleams of a dull fire and the dusky sunset, as they floated together around his easy-chair, you could see that he was a man of thought and power.

The man looked up and, dropping his hands to the table with a sort of weariness, answered, as if to some person away off—

"No, I did not speak—I never did speak!"

It was a strange answer, and the lady's face grew anxious as she looked upon him. Certainly he had uttered some sound, or she would not have asked the question. She arose and moving across the room, leaned her elbow upon his chair, looking thoughtfully down in his face.

He started, as if but that moment conscious of her presence, and arose probably to avoid the grave questioning of her look.

"Of what were you thinking, James?" she said almost abruptly, for a superstitious thought forced the question to her lips almost against her will.

"I was thinking," said the man, resting his head against the oak carvings of his chair, "I was thinking of a time when we were all in the south of Spain."

"Of your mother's death?" inquired the lady in a low voice. "It was a mournful event to remember. What is there in this soft twilight to remind us both of the same thing, for I was thinking of that time also!"

"Of my mother's death?" inquired the gentleman, lifting his eyes to her face suddenly, almost sternly. "I was not thinking of that, but of my father's marriage."

The lady did not speak, but her face grew pale, and over it swept a smile so vivid with surprise, so eloquent of mournfulness, that she seemed transfigured. Her hand dropped away from the chair, and walking back to the window she sat down, uttering a faint sigh, as if some slumbering pain had been sharpened into anguish by the few words that had been spoken. Twenty years had she lived in the house with James Harrington, and never before had the subject of her marriage with his father been mentioned between them, save as it arose in the discussion of household events.

Her marriage with his father, that was the subject of his gloomy thoughts. Had she then failed to render him content in his home? Had she in anything fallen short of those gentle duties he had received so gratefully from the mother that was gone? Why was it that thoughts of Spain and of events that had transpired there, should have seized upon them both at the same time?

She arose again, pale and with a tremor of the limbs. The balmy air grew sickening to her—his presence an oppression. For the first time she began to doubt if she were not an object of dislike to her husband's son. He saw her pass from the room without turning a glance that way, and followed her with a look of self-reproach. He felt pained and humiliated. After a silence of so many years, why had he dared to utter words to that woman—his step-mother—which could never be explained? Had all manhood forsaken him? Had he sunk to be a common-place carper in the household which she had invested with so much beautiful happiness? Stung with these thoughts he arose and sought the open air also.

An old man sat in a room above the one just deserted by its inmates. He was watching the sunset also, with unusal interest, not because it brought back loving or sad memories, but with an admiration of the sense alone. With tastes cultivated to their extremest capacity, and a philosophy of happiness essentially material, this old man permitted no hour to pass by without gleaning some sensual enjoyment from it, that a less egotistical person might never have discovered. An epicure in all things, he had attained to a sort of self-worship, which would have been sublime if applied to the First Cause of all that is beautiful. His splendid person was held in reverence, not because it was made in the image of his God, but for the powers of enjoyment it possessed—for the symmetry it displayed, and the defiance which it had so long given to the inroads of age.

As a whole and in detail, this old man was a self-worshipper. Like all idolaters he was blind to the defects of his earthly god, and if defects would force themselves, upon his notice the conviction only rendered him more urgent to extort homage from others.

The room in which this old man sat, was a library fitted up expressly for himself. It was one of his peculiarities that his sources of enjoyment must be exclusive, in order to be valuable. He would not willingly have shared a single tint of that beautiful sunset with another, unless satisfied that the admiration thus excited would give zest to his own pleasurable sensations.

Thus, with the selfishness of an epicure and the tastes of a savant, he surrounded himself with the most luxurious elegance. The book-cases of carved ebony that run along two sides of the apartment, were filled with rare books, accumulated during his travels, some of them worth their weight in gold. Doors of plate glass protected their antique and often gorgeous bindings, and medallions of rare bronzes were inlaid in the rich carvings of the cornices.

Over the mantle-piece of Egyptian marble, carved to a miracle of art, hung an original by Guido, one of those ethereal pictures in which the figures seem to float through the glowing atmosphere, borne onward only by a gushing sense of their own happiness.

The French windows opposite were filled, like the book-cases, with plate-glass pure and limpid as water, and two bronze Bacchantes, thrown into attitudes of riotous enjoyment, held back voluminous folds of crimson brocade that enriched the light which fell through them. A variety of chairs stood about, carved like the book-cases, cushioned with crimson leather and embossed with gold. The ebony desk upon which the old man's elbow rested, as he looked forth upon the river, was scattered over with books and surmounted by a writing apparatus of malachite, whose mate could hardly have been found out of the imperial *salons* of Russia.

Everything was in keeping, the luxurious room and the old man whose presence completed it. If the two persons we have just described seemed imposing in their moral grandeur, while they sat thoughtfully watching the sunset, this man with his keen, black eyes, his beard flowing downward in white waves from the chin and upper lip, which was curved exactly in the form of a bow, took from the material alone an interest almost as impressive.

The old man saw his wife pass down in front of the house and descend toward the river. The black dress and scarlet shawl which she wore, rendered her a picturesque object in the landscape, and as such the old man was admiring her. Directly after, his son followed, and another stately figure was added to the view; but his walk verged toward the hills, and he was soon lost among the trees.

The old man was vexed at this derangement in his picture; but directly there came in sight a little boat, ploughing through the golden ripples cast downward by the sun, and half veiled in the glowing mists of the river. He watched the boat while it came dancing toward the shore, and smiled when his wife paused a moment on the bank, as if awaiting its approach.

"She is right. A figure upon the shore completes the whole thing. One seldom sees a picture so perfect! Claude Lorraine!—why, his sunsets are leaden compared to this! Oh, she turns off and spoils the effect by throwing the willows between us! Why will women be so restless? Now a female caprice—nothing more—has destroyed the most lovely effect I ever saw; just as I was drinking it in, too. But the boat is pretty—yes, yes, that enlivens the foreground—bravo! Capital, Ben, capital!—that stoop is just the thing; and the youngsters, how beautifully they group themselves! Hallo! upon my honor, if that young scamp is not making love to Lina! I don't pretend to know what the attitude of love-making is!"

The old man fell back in his chair, and drew a hand over his eyes with a restless motion, muttering uneasily,

"Ralph and Lina? upon my word, I have been blind as a bat. How far has the thing gone? Has Mabel encouraged it? Does she know? What hand can James have had in bringing this state of things about? These two children—why, the thing is preposterous!"

The old man left his easy-chair, as these unpleasant conjectures forced themselves upon him, and, as if sickened by the landscape he had just been admiring, shut it out by a jerk of the hand, which brought the crimson drapery flowing in loose folds from its gilded rods, and gave the whole room a tent-like seclusion. In the rich twilight thus produced, the old man walked to and fro angrily and thoughtful. At last he took his hat and left the house.

CHAPTER II.

THE HILL SIDE ADVENTURE.

Ralph Harrington and Lina French had been out upon the river, since the shadow began to fall eastward upon its waters. The day had been so calm, and everything their eyes fell upon was so luxuriantly lovely, that they could not force themselves to come in doors, till the twilight overtook them.

Old Ben—or rather our Ben, for he was not so very old, after all—who considered himself master of the little craft which he was mooring in the cove, had aided and abetted this truant disposition in the young people, after a fashion that Mr. Harrington might not have approved; and all that day there was a queer sort of smile upon his features, that meant more than a host of words would have conveyed in another person. Never, in his whole life, had Ben been so obliging in his management of the boat. If Lina took a fancy to a branch of golden rod, or a cluster of fringed gentian upon the shore, Ben would put in at the nearest convenient point, and sit half an hour together in the boat, with his arms folded over his oars, and his head bowed, as if fast asleep. Yet Ben Benson, according to my best knowledge and belief, was never more thoroughly awake than on that particular day.

They were gliding dreamily along at the foot of the Weehawken hills, with their boat half full of fall flowers and branches, when Lina saw a tree so brilliantly red, that she insisted on climbing to the rock where it was rooted, in search of the leaves that were dropped sleepily from its boughs.

Ben shot into a little inlet formed by two jutting rocks, and Ralph sprang ashore, holding out his hand for Lina, who scarcely touched it as she took her place by his side.

"Now for a scramble!" exclaimed the youth, grasping Lina's hand tightly in his own; and away, like a pair of wild birds, the two young creatures darted up the hill.

The rock, behind which the tree stood, was scattered over with leaves of a deep crimson, brightening to scarlet on the edges, and veined with a green so deep, that it seemed like black. Among the endless variety of leaves they had discovered, these were the most singular, and Lina gathered them up in handfuls only to scatter them abroad again when a more tempting waif caught her eye.

"Wait a moment—wait, Ralph; oh, here is a whole drift of them; see how bright they look, quivering over the fleeces of moss that slope down the rocks. If I could but take the whole home, just as it is, for mamma!"

Lina was stooping eagerly as she spoke. A quick, rattling sound in the leaves struck her, and she called out, laughing—

"If it were not so late in the fall, Ralph, I should think there was a locust singing in the leaves."

That moment Ben, who had tied his boat, came scrambling up the hill. He took his place by Ralph upon a shelf of the rock, and began to sniff the air with his flat, pug nose, like a watch-dog scenting an enemy. The noise which interested Lina was still now, and he only heard her observation about the locust.

"Ain't there a strong smell of old honey about here, Mister Ralph?" he said, looking anxiously around; "something between the scent of an old bee-hive and a wasp's nest?"

"There is a singular scent I fancy, Ben," answered the young man, following Lina with his eyes. "Not disagreeable, though!"

"Do you begin to guess what it means?" inquired Ben, anxiously.

"Not at all," answered Ralph, waving his hand and smiling upon Lina, who held up a branch of richly shaded leaves she had just taken from a maple bough, laughing gaily as the main branch swept rustling back to its place. "Not at all, Ben; it may be the frost-bitten fern-leaves—they sometimes give out a delicious odor. Everything in the woods takes a pleasant scent at this season of the year, I believe."

Lina, who was restless as a bird, changed her position again, and the movement was followed by another quick, hissing sound from a neighboring rock.

"So that is Miss Lina's idea of a locust, is it," muttered Ben, looking sharply around. If that's a locust, Mister Ralph, the animal has got a tremenjus cold, for he's hoarse—yes, hoarse as a rattlesnake—do you hear, Mister Ralph? Hoarse as a rattle-snake!"

Ben was intensely excited, and looked eagerly around, searching for danger.

"Look!" he whispered, after a moment; "the sunshine on the red leaves dazzles the eyesight—but look stiddy on the rock there, where the green moss is fluttered over with them red leaves—don't you see the moss kinder a stirrin'?"

Ralph looked, and there, about six feet from Lina, he saw what seemed at first a mass of gorgeous foliage, quivering upon the green moss, for a glow of warm sunshine fell athwart it and dazzled his eyes for the moment. But anxiety cleared his vision, and he saw that the glowing mass was a serpent drawn from a cleft of the rock by the warm sun. Disturbed by Lina's approach, he was that instant coiling itself up for a spring. His head was erect, his tongue quivered like a thread of flame, and two horrible fangs, crooked and venomous, shot out on each side his open jaws. In the centre of the coil, and just behind the head, which vibrated to and fro with horrible eagerness, the rattles kept in languid play, as if tired of warning her.

Ralph, pale as death and trembling all over, stooped down and seized a fragment of rock; but Lina was too near, he dared not hurl it. The young girl enticed by the floating leaves which the sun struck so brightly around the serpent, had her foot poised to spring forward.

"Lina!" cried Ralph, in a low voice, "Lina!"

"In one moment," cried the girl, laughing wilfully; "wait till I get those leaves drifting across the rock there."

The gipsey bonnet had fallen on one side; her hands were full of red leaves, and she was smiling saucily. This unconsciousness of danger was horrible. The young man shrunk and quivered through all his frame.

"Lina, step aside—to the right—dear Lina, I entreat, I insist!"

His voice was deep and husky, scarcely more than a whisper, and yet full of command.

Lina looked back, and her smiling lips grew white with astonishment. Ralph stood above her, pale as marble; his hand grasping the rock was uplifted, his fierce, distended eyes looked wildly beyond her. Wild with nameless dread the young girl stepped backward, following his glance with her eyes. Her breath was checked—she could not scream. The glittering eyes of the rattlesnake, though turned upon another, held her motionless. A prickly sensation pierced her lips through and through, as the snake loosened his coils and changed his position so abruptly, that his back glittered in the sunshine, like a mass of jewels rapidly disturbed, making her blind and dizzy with the poisonous glow. Still she moved backward like a statue recoiling from its base.

"Now," whispered Ben, "now give it to him."

A crash—a spring—and like a fiery lance the rattlesnake shot by her, striking her garments as he went, and, falling short of his enemy, coiled himself for a new spring.

Ralph's hand was uplifted as the fragment of rock had left it; and there, within a few feet, lay the rattlesnake eager for a new onset, and quivering through all its folds.

The ice broke from Lina's voice. She uttered a wild cry, stooped quick as lightning, seized a fragment of rock,—dashed it with both hands upon the rattlesnake, and, rushing by, threw herself before Ralph. Her eyes turned with horror upon the work she had done.

"Oh, have mercy! have mercy! he is alive yet!" she shrieked, as writhing and convulsed, the rattlesnake drew his glittering folds out from beneath the stone, and wound himself up, coil after coil, more venomous than ever.

"Step behind me—behind me, Lina," cried the young man, attempting to force her away.

But she threw her arms around him, and with her eyes turned back upon the glittering horror, strove with all her frail strength to push him backward out of danger.

The brave generosity of this attempt might have destroyed them both; but, just as the rattlesnake was prepared to lance out again, Ben, who had torn a branch from an ash tree overhead, rushed fearlessly down and struck at him with the host of light twigs that were yet covered with delicate maize-colored leaves.

This act increased Lina's terror, for the blows which Ben gave were so light that a baby would have laughed at them.

"Don't be skeer'd, nor nothing," shouted Ben, gently belaboring his enemy with the ash bough, "I've got the pizen sarpent under, just look this way and you'll find him tame as a rabbit. Lord! how the critter does hate the smell of ash leaves! Now do look, Miss Lina!"

Lina clung trembling to Ralph, but turned her eyes with breathless dread toward the rattlesnake.

"Come close by—just get a good look at him—the stiffening is out of his back-bone now, I tell you!" cried Ben triumphantly. "See him a trying to poke his head under the moss just at the sight of a yaller ash leaf—ain't he a coward, now ain't he?"

"What is it—what does it mean?" inquired Ralph, re-assured now that Lina was out of danger—"did the stone wound him?"

"The stone!" repeated Ben scornfully,—"a round stone covered over with moss like a pin cushion! Why, if this ere rattlesnake could laugh as well as bite, he'd have a good haw-haw over Miss Lina's way of fighting snakes. It takes something to kill them, I tell you. But I've got him—he knows me. Look at him now!"

Ralph moved a step forward and looked down upon the rattlesnake, towards which Ben was pointing with his ash branch, as unconcerned as if it had been an earthworm.

The rattlesnake had loosened all his folds, and lay prone upon his back striving to burrow his head beneath the leaves and moss, evidently without the power to escape or show fight.

"Wonderful, isn't it!" said Ben, eyeing his prostrate foe with grim complacency; "now I should just like to know what there is in the natur of this ere ash limb that wilts his pizen down so? Why, he's harmless as a garter snake. Come down and see for yourself, Mister Ralph."

"No, no!" pleaded Lina, faint and trembling, for the reaction of the recent terror was upon her, and she grew sick now that the danger was over. "I am ill—blind—Ralph—Ralph!"

She spoke his name in faint murmurs, her head fell forward and her eyes closed. Ralph thought she was dying. He remembered that the rattlesnake had touched her in his first spring, and took the faintness as the working of his venom in her veins. He called out in the agony of this thought,—

"Ben! Ben! she is dying—she is dead—he struck her!"

Ben gave the rattlesnake a vigorous lash, which turned him on his back again, and sprang up the rocks.

"Have you killed him? Is he dead? Oh, Ben, he has struck her on her arm or hand, perhaps! Look, look—see if you can find the wound!"

Ben gave a hasty glance at the white face lying upon Ralph's shoulder, and uttered a smothered humph, and with this emphatic expression he turned to watch the common enemy. The snake had turned slowly over upon the moss and was slinking away through a crevice in the rocks. Ben uttered a mellow chuckling laugh as his rattles disappeared.

"Did you see him, the sneak? Did you see him steal off?" he said, looking at Ralph.

"You should have crushed him—ground him to powder," said the young man, fierce with anxiety, "for he has poisoned all the sweet life in her veins. She is dying, Ben, she is dying!"

Ben threw down the ash branch and plunged one hand into a pocket in search of his tobacco box. With great deliberation he rolled up a quantity of the weed and deposited it under one cheek, before he attempted to answer either the pleading looks or passionate language of the youth..

"Mister Ralph, it's plain as a marlin-spike, you ain't used to snakes and wimmen. In that partiklar your edecation's been shamefully neglected. Never kill a rattlesnake arter he's shut in his fangs and turns on his back for mercy—its sneakin' business. Never think a woman is dead till the sexton sends in his bill. Snakes and feminine wimmen is hard to kill. Now any landshark, as has his eyes out of his heart, could see that. Miss Lina's only took a faintin' turn, that comes after a skeer like hers, axactly as sleep stills a tired baby. Just give her here now, I'll take her down to the river, throw a cap full of water in her face, and she'll be bright as a new dollar long before we get across."

The look of relief that came to the face of Ralph Harrington was like a flash of sunshine. A grateful smile lighted his eyes, but instead of resigning Lina to the stout arms held out by Ben Benson, he gathered her close to his bosom, saying in a proud voice,

"Why, Ben, I want no help to carry Lina," he bore her down the hill, looking now and then upon her face so tenderly, that Ben, who was eyeing him all the way with sidelong glances, made a hideous face to himself, as if to capitulate with his dignity for wanting to smile at anything so childish.

"Sit down there," said Ben, pointing to the stern of his boat, "sit down there, Mister Ralph, and kinder ease her down to the seat; your face is hot as fire a carrying her. Now I'll fill my hat with water and give her a souse that'll bring the red to her mouth in a jiffy."

"No, no," said Ralph, arresting Ben as he stooped to fill his little glazed hat, "don't throw it, hold your cap here, Ben, and I'll sprinkle her face. How pale it is! How like a dear lifeless angel she looks?"

Ben stooped to the water, and Ralph trembling and flushed, bent over the pale beautiful face on his bosom, closer, closer, till his lips drew the blood back to hers, and her eyelids began to quiver like shadows on a white rose.

Ben had slowly risen from the water with the glazed hat dripping between his two great hands; but when he saw Ralph's position, the good fellow ducked downward again, and made a terrible splashing in the river, as he dipped the brimming hat a second time, while that grotesque suppression of a smile convulsed his hard features again.

It was wonderful how long it took Ben to fill his hat this time. One would have thought him fishing for pearls in the depths of the river, he was so fastidious in finding the exact current best calculated to restore a young lady from faintness. When he did arise, everything about the young people was, to use his nautical expression, ship-shape and above-board. The color was stealing back to Lina's face, like blushes from the first flowering of apple blossoms, and a brightness stole from beneath her half-closed eyelids, that had something softer and deeper than mere life in it.

"It is not necessary, Ben; she is better, I think," said the young man, looking half-timidly into the boatman's face. "Don't you think she looks beauti—— I mean, don't you think she looks better, a great deal better, Ben?"

Again, that grotesque expression seized upon Ben's features; and, setting down his hat, as if it had been a wash-bowl, he took Lina's straw gipsy from the bottom of the boat, where it had fallen, and began to shake out the ribbons with great energy.

"She grows pale—I'm afraid she is losing ground again, Ben," said Ralph, as the color wavered to and fro on the fair cheek beneath his gaze.

"Shall I fill the hat again?" answered Ben, demurely. "It kinder seems to be the filling on it that brings her round easiest?"

"No, you're very kind, but I'll sprinkle her forehead —she has been so frightened, you know, I dare say she thought the snake had bitten—had bitten one of us, Ben! That is right, hold the hat this way."

Ben dropped on his knees in the bottom of the boat, crushing down a whole forest of Lina's wild flowers, and held up the hat reverently between his hands.

Ralph put back the masses of brown hair from Lina's face, and began to bathe it gently, almost holding his breath, as if she were a babe he was afraid of waking.

"Isn't she a dear, generous creature?" he said, at last, with a burst of admiration. It took a fright like this, to prove how precious she was to us all!"

Instantly, a cloud of crimson swept over Lina's face and bosom, and with it came an illumination of the features, that made the young man tremble beneath her light weight.

"Lina, dear Lina!" he whispered.

She arose from his arms, crimson again to the temples, and sat down in silence, her eyes downcast, her lips trembling, as if a great effort kept her from bursting into tears.

Ralph saw this, and his face clouded.

"What have I done? Are you angry with me, Lina?" he whispered, as Ben pushed the boat off and gathered up his oars.

"Angry! No, I cannot tell. What has happened to us, Ralph?"

"Don't you remember, Lina?"

"Remember?—yes—now. Oh, it was horrible!"

"I, Lina, I shall always remember it with more pleasure than pain."

She lifted her eyes with a timid, questioning glance. The young man drew close to her, and as Ben dashed his oars in the water, thus drowning his voice to all but her, whispered—

"Because it has told me in my heart of hearts how entirely I love you, Lina."

Her maidenly intuition was aroused now. She shrunk from his glance, blushing and in silence.

"Will you not speak to me, Lina?"

"What can I say, Ralph?"

"That you love me."

A little coquettish smile stole over her mouth.

"We have said that to each other from the cradle up."

"No, never before, never with this depth of meaning—my heart is broken up, Lina; there is nothing left of it but a flood of tender love—you are no longer my sister, but my idol; I worship you, Lina!"

"Again Lina lifted her eyes, so blue, so flooded with gentle gratitude; but she did not speak, for Ben was resting on his oars, while the boat crept silently down the current.

"Why don't you steer for home?" asked Ralph, impatient of Ben's eyes.

"I see that ere old respectable gentleman on the bank, a looking this way, so I thought we'd lie to and refit more particularly about the upper story. If Miss Lina there'll just shake them ere curls back a trifle, and tie on her bonnet; and if you, Mister Ralph, could just manage to look t'other way and take an observation of the scenery, perhaps we should make out to pass with a clear bill and without too much overhaulin'."

"You are right," said Ralph after a moment, looking anxiously toward the shore, where the stately figure of old Mr. Harrington was distinctly visible; "my father is a great stickler for proprieties. Here is your hat, Lina—let me fold this scarf about you."

As Ralph spoke, the flush left his face, and a look of fatigue crept over Lina. Ben still rested on his oars. He was determined to give the old gentleman ample opportunity to continue his walk inland, before the young people were submitted to his scrutiny. As they lingered floating upon the waters, a tiny boat shot from beneath a cliff below them, and was propelled swiftly down the river. In it was a female rendered conspicuous by a scarlet shawl, and in the still life around them, this boat became an object of interest. It was only for a moment, the young people were too deeply occupied with their own feelings to dwell upon even this picturesque adjunct to a scene which was now flooded gorgeously with the sunset. Ben, however, became restless and anxious. Without a word he seized his oars, and pushed directly for the cove in which his boat was usually moored. Ralph and Lina went homewards with a reluctance never experienced before. A sense of concealment oppressed them. An indefinite terror of meeting their friends, rendered their steps slow upon the green sward. As they drew towards the house, Ralph paused.

"Speak to me, Lina, my heart is heavy without the sound of your voice: say you love me, or shall I be miserable with suspense?"

The young girl listened with a saddened and downcast look. A heaviness had fallen upon her with the first sight of old Mr. Harrington on the bank. True he had gone now, but his shadow seemed upon her still.

"Will you not speak to me, Lina? Will you not relieve this suspense by one little word?"

She lifted her head gently, but with modest pride.

"You know that I love you, Ralph."

"But not as you have done. I am not content with a simple household affection. Say that you love me, body and soul, faults and virtues, even as I love you."

Lina drew herself up, and a smile, sad but full of sweetness—half presentiment, half faith—beamed on her face.

"Your soul may search mine to its depths and find only itself there. I do love you, Ralph, even as you love me!"

Her answer was almost solemn in its dignity; for the moment that fair young girl looked and spoke like a priestess.

Ralph Harrington reached out his hand, taking hers in its grasp.

"Why are you so pale? Why tremble so violently?" he said, moving towards the house.

"I do not know," answered Lina, "but it seems as if the breath of that rattlesnake were around us yet."

"You are sad—your nerves have been dreadfully shaken—but to-morrow, Lina, all will be bright again."

Lina smiled faintly.

"Oh, yes, all must be bright to-morrow."

As they passed the iron gate that separated the lawn from the shore, Ben, who had seated himself in the boat, arose suddenly, and pushed his little craft into the river again. His weather-beaten face was turned anxiously down the stream. He seized the oars, and urging his boat into the current, pulled stoutly, as if some important object had suddenly seized upon him.

"Where can she be a going to? What on earth is she after? Has the old rascal broke out at last? Has she give way? But I'll overhaul her! Pull away, Ben Benson, pull away, you old rascal! What bisness had you with them ere youngsters, and *she* in trouble! Pull away, or I'll break every bone in your body, Ben Benson!"

Thus muttering and reviling himself, Ben was soon out of sight, burying himself, as it seemed, in the dull purple of the night as it crept over the Hudson.

(To be continued.)

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* * * In order to secure "Lost Jewels" from unauthorised publication in England, the manuscript has been submitted to an English gentleman, who has made such additions as entitle him to a legal copyright in England. As its Editor, consequently, he has entered it at Stationers' Hall, London, before publication here.

ALICE.

Bright star amid the cloud-forms of the past,
  Alice, my backward gaze is fixed on thee!
There is the look you turned upon me last,
  And in your face the same serenity,
The same high faith upon your noble brow—
  O, fade not, gentle vision from above!
For, in my thought, you are more beauteous now
  Than when you lured me on and made me love.

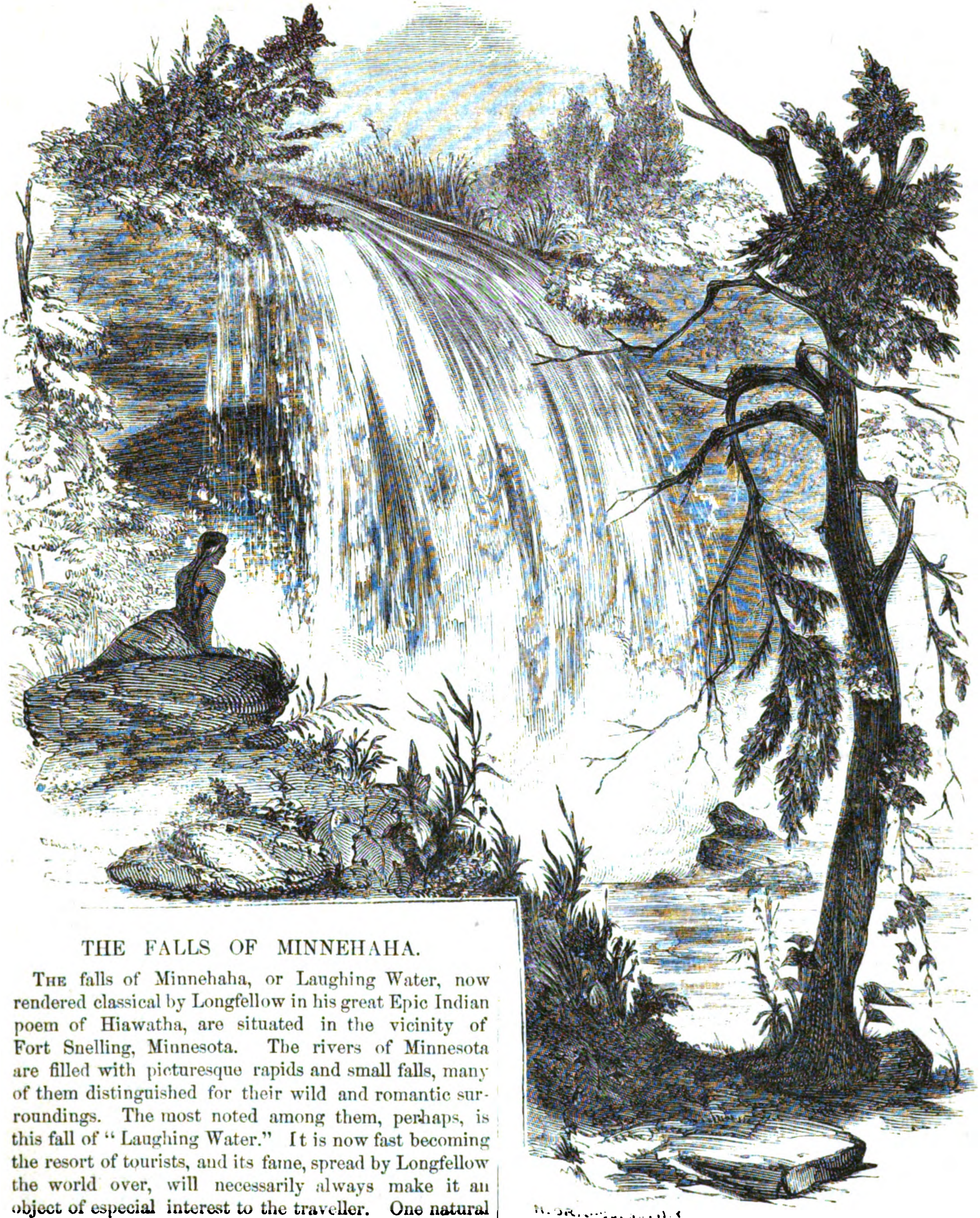
Beside the river once I walk'd with you;
  It may be, you forget so small a thing;
In evening's tints faded the heavens blue,
  The dark trees hemming, the wind murmuring,
The babbling tide—these tuneful sounds I heard,
  Set to your voice, that o'er my senses stole:
Perchance you did not know that every word
  Was like a silver link to chain my soul.

Then came the hopes and fears of hidden love;
  Where'er you went, it was a blessed place,
Haunted, I dreamed with angels from above,
  My sweetest joy was to behold your face.
I longed to do you some great good—then die:
  That which you touched was sacred; still, I hold—
Poor relic of the precious days gone by—
  A few words writ by you, more dear than gold.

I deem you little less than angel-born,
  Although you led me on to love in vain;
For, where you could not love, you did not scorn;
  You were too kind to give me needless pain.
I was your veriest slave if you but smiled,
  And still I madly hoped your love to win;
And wept to know, "she thinks me but a child,
  And dreams not of the fire that burns within."

I saw you stand, with him to whom you gave
  Your plighted troth, upon the ocean shore;
And, as your glances mingled in the wave,
  I felt that you were one for evermore;
And, like a coward soul, I could not speak;—
  I conquer now, rejoicing in your fate:
His noble heart is strong as mine was weak;
  I was not worthy of a love so great.

Life's dream is over; I have borne the smart,
  And live to bless you for alluring me:
If there is aught of greatness in my heart,
  It sprang at first from futile love of thee.
For, when I found my airy hope was gone,
  There came a night of dark and bitter strife;
And, with the light of morning's gradual dawn,
  My soul expanded into noble life.



THE FALLS OF MINNEHAHA.

The falls of Minnehaha, or Laughing Water, now rendered classical by Longfellow in his great Epic Indian poem of Hiawatha, are situated in the vicinity of Fort Snelling, Minnesota. The rivers of Minnesota are filled with picturesque rapids and small falls, many of them distinguished for their wild and romantic surroundings. The most noted among them, perhaps, is this fall of "Laughing Water." It is now fast becoming the resort of tourists, and its fame, spread by Longfellow the world over, will necessarily always make it an object of especial interest to the traveller. One natural peculiarity it possesses is deserving of mention. The visitor is enabled by a ledge of rocks to pass behind the falls, where he finds a recess beneath the bed of the river extending back nearly fifty feet. Standing in this recess and looking out through the water at a time when the sun is shining upon it, an effect is produced transcendently beautiful. The feathery, leaping, laughing water is laced and interlaced with rainbows. A thousand hues seem blending and playing upon the surface. The waters are dyed in colors. A more beautiful sight can scarcely be found. After viewing these prismatic effects the tourist can pass around and out from behind the fall at the opposite side from which he entered. Our artist, Mr. Dallas, who took the sketch upon the spot before Longfellow had given the place celebrity, has caught the spirit of the scene with great faithfulness.

We refresh the memory of our readers with a passage from Hiawatha, descriptive of the scene:

> "Only once his pace he slackened,
> Only once he paused or halted,
> Paused to purchase heads of arrows
> Of the ancient arrow maker,
> In the land of the Dacotahs,
> Where the falls of Minnehaha
> Flash and gleam among the oak trees,
> Laugh and leap into the valley.
> "There the ancient arrow maker
> Makes his arrow heads of sandstone,
> Arrow heads of chalcedony,
> Arrow heads of flint and jasper,
> Smoothed and sharpened at the edges,
> Hard and polished, keen and costly.
> "With him dwelt his dark eyed daughter,
> Wayward as the Minnehaha,
> With her moods of shade and sunshine;
> Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate,
> Feet as rapid as the river.
> Tresses flowing like the water,
> And as musical a laughter;
> And he named her from the river,
> From the water-fall he named her,
> Minnehaha, Laughing Water.
> "Was it here for heads of arrows,
> Arrow heads of chalcedony,
> Arrow heads of flint and jasper,
> That my Hiawatha halted
> In the land of the Dacotahs?
> "Was it not to see the maiden,
> See the face of Laughing Water
> Peeping from behind the curtain,
> Hear the rustling of her garments,
> From behind the waving curtain,
> As we see the Minnehaha
> Gleaming, glancing through the branches,
> As one hears the Laughing Water
> From behind its screen of branches?"

STAYS AND SLIPPERS:

A TALE.

"SHOULDERS, Jemima!" said Miss Partington to her niece, who had been just admitted to the dessert with her two younger sisters. "Shoulders, miss!" repeated the ancient damsel, thrusting back her elbows, and drawing up her head for the young lady's especial imitation; "shoulders once more, and pray do not lean back in your chair! Really, General Phillips," she added, addressing her brother-in-law, "I must get *you* to speak to Miss Crampton about the slovenly carriage of your eldest daughter. I have addressed her so often on the subject, that I am tired of the office."

The general turned himself in his chair, pettishly exclaiming: "I will, I will;" but the promise of a man who speaks in a half-doze can hardly be held binding. He attempted to resume his doze, but in vain. Miss Partington, as commander-in-chief of the general's household, had to consult him continually respecting an important event which was daily anticipated. The Earl of Laxington and family had promised a visit to Primley Hall on their way to the Highlands, and Miss Partington—overwhelmed as she was with preparations—had scarcely slept since receiving the news of the intended honor, and she seemed determined that her brother should have no rest either.

"I am most fearful," she continued, "lest anything should go wrong, and that his lorsdhip should leave with bad impressions respecting our management—(Janet, my dear, I am shocked! Cut it, miss! How could you think of *peeling* an orange?)—for of course, general, the high rank of his lordship insures the utmost precision and exactitude in his own establishment."

This sentiment conveyed Miss Partington's confession of faith respecting virtue and dignity. A rigid adherence to forms and ceremonies constituted, according to her notions, the highest of human excellences. Possessing a great veneration for nobility, she imagined that the higher the rank of individuals the greater share they possessed of her favorite formality. These notions she had never mixed sufficiently with the world to correct, and thus she was on the death of her sister, intrusted with the management of General Phillip's family in a remote country-house.

Exactly at a quarter to seven o'clock, Miss Crampton, the governess, entered the dining-room to lead the young ladies to the school-room, where they were to be entertained by learning their various tasks for the next morning; and from which they were never allowed to rise till the clock struck nine, when they retired to rest. On this occasion Miss Partington announced, that next morning, after lessons, it was her intention to speak to the ladies respecting the great event which was expected shortly to take place. The three Misses Phillips then rose from the table, and advancing in succession to the spot where their governess stood, placed their arms before them, made a polite courtesy to their father and aunt, and left the room in single file, headed by Miss Crampton. Shortly after, Miss Partington retired to the drawing-room, at the door of which the still-room maid awaited her orders. These having been given, were promptly obeyed; and soon afterwards, the footman was sent with "Miss Partington's compliments to General Phillips——and coffee;" whereupon the general arose and adjourned to the drawing-room with military promptitude. These events happened, with very few exceptions, exactly at the same points of time, in precisely the same manner, three hundred and sixty-five times in every year.

The school-room at Primley Hall was a cold-looking apartment, without carpet or draperies. At one end was a long table, surrounded by several chairs, placed exactly equidistant by the correct eye of an esteemed house-maid. A perpendicular book-case stood between the windows, in each of which was placed a globe, carefully covered with brown Holland. An embroidery-frame and work-table adorned each side of the fireplace. Back-boards, stocks, and other old-fashioned implements of physical education, were hung up in various parts of the room; for calisthenic exercises were pronounced, both by Miss Partington and her ally the governess, to be quite improper for young ladies in their station in life: they were vulgar and unfeminine. A writing-desk, covered with green baize when out of use, and a high-backed chair, placed at the head of the the table, formed Miss Crampton's post of honor, and completed the furniture of the Primley Hall seat of learning.

Next day, precisely at the appointed hour of twelve o'clock, and not above a minute after Miss Crampton had closed the geographical class-book with "That will do for this morning, ladies," Miss Partington entered the school-room. The governess abdicated her seat immediately, and the aunt, with stately step, advanced and took it, Miss Crampton standing reverentially by her side. There was for a time a dead silence, to render what was to follow the more impressive. In due time Miss Partington broke it, and commenced by informing her nieces that the Earl of Laxington, with his son, Lord Augustus Montgomery, his daughter, Lady Belinda Montgomery, and his niece, the honorable Miss Pelham, were about to honor them and Primley Hall with a visit. She cautioned the Misses Phillips in regard to their carriage and conduct, that it should be rigidly correct in every particular: she anticipated they would find little difficulty in behaving with strict propriety; as, to do that, they would only have to copy the actions of their guests, who, from their high rank, were of course models of undeviating regularity and strict etiquette. She hoped her nieces would demean themselves with that gravity which was so estimable in ladies of their age; but addressed herself more especially to the youngest auditor, Georgina, who had occasionally betrayed symptoms of levity, which, considering her age (quite eight years), had surprised and sometimes shocked her. The pupils promised obedience and the most exemplary demeanor; Miss Partington patted each affectionately on the head in order of seniority, and left the room; while Miss Crampton, placing a puzzle-map of Asia upon the table, bade the young ladies "play" while she retired to put on a walking dress. About an hour after, all four were seen marching with measured steps in the grounds, till the nursery dinner-bell should summon them to the house at five minutes to two o'clock.

On the following morning, a servant, belonging to the family with whom the noble guest was making a temporary sojourn, rode up the avenue with a letter announcing that the earl would arrive in an hour. So well had every plan been laid, that this somewhat short notice scarcely disconcerted the household in the least. Before the hour had elapsed, the young ladies were dressed in prim demi-toilet, awaiting the summons to appear for introduction to their coming companions; but exhibited signs of impatience which drew forth several severe rebukes from Miss Crampton. General Phillips betook himself to the dining-parlor, so as to be ready to receive Lord Laxington in the hall. The comely porter was at his post, and the servants lined the entry. It was not until she had satisfied herself that all these arrangements were perfected, that Miss Partington retired to her allotted place and position: she at length perched, rather than sat, herself upon a chair in the drawing-room—her countenance expressive of the calmest patience, her mind without a care, her dress without a wrinkle. The dearest hopes of the last three weeks of her life were soon to be realized—a peer of the realm was about to witness the effects of her clock-work management—to behold the perfectitude of her rigid regularity. It was not, therefore, without feeling all that emotion which she ever allowed herself to give way to (and that was not much), that Miss Partington heard the carriage-wheels sound their gritty way along the avenue. Curiosity—that single feeling which the most severe discipline is not able to banish from the female breast—induced her to look out of the window to view the stately procession which would, she expected, pass before it. Conceive her disappointment, therefore, when, in its stead, she beheld a dusty travelling-carriage, occupied by the earl in a plain Macintosh, and his daughter in a very plain dress. A lady's-maid sat in the dickey, and a couple of road-begrimed grooms rode in the rumble. But where were the son and the cousin? This question was ocularly answered in a manner which increased the old lady's astonishment tenfold. While the general was receiving his guest in the hall, up galloped Miss Pelham upon a Shetland pony, in a state of high exultation at having beaten her cousin in a race. But a more extraordinary spectacle next presented itself to the aunt's wonderment; for Lord Augustus Montgomery soon after made his appearance upon neighbor Mactaggart's donkey.

Miss Partington was petrified! How happy she was that the school-room window looked out upon the lawn instead of towards the avenue, and that the dangerous example of her noble visitors had been hidden from her innocent nieces' eyes. But could she believe her own? Was it possible that titled personages could be guilty of such extravagances? Surely there must be some mistake. That ill-dressed man in the dusty carriage could not be General Phillips's brother-officer, the earl, of whose high birth and breeding she had heard so much? But in the very midst of these reflections, Miss Partington was undeceived: the door opened, and her brother entered with his noble guest. The earl, a frank, but well-bred man, saluted his hostess in a manner which put everything out of Miss Partington's head except his rank and title. He soon made her forget the dusty carriage and the donkey; for, with the unerring tact of good-breeding, his lordship deported himself in a way which would, he knew, be most agreeable to the maiden aunt, and consequently appeared to her as a person, stately, after her own heart.

Meanwhile the occupants of the school-room had to endure the torments of impatience before the bell rang for them to be presented to the earl and his family.

They had heard, poor creatures, all the bustle which the arrival had occasioned, without being able to participate in the general satisfaction of the establishment. They sat motionless upon their chairs, strictly watched by their grim governess. They did not dare to move for fear of tumbling their muslin frocks, or creasing their dove-colored waist-ribbons. After enduring this demure suspense for half an hour, the door suddenly opened, and in came a young gentleman in a round jacket, flourishing a stick, and inquiring for his sister Bel. Miss Crampton screamed; but the young ladies vented their surprise in a more prudent manner: they turned their eyes slowly towards each other, and then returned them upon their governess, with the slow motion of puppet Turks worked by machinery.

"I trust I have not alarmed you—I beg pardon, are you Miss Phillips?" inquired the intruder, stepping up to that young lady, and offering his hand. Jemina looked towards her governess to see if she might take it. An approving nod followed, the instant the juvenile gallant announced that he was Lord Montgomery, and the three girls held out their hands one after another, courtesied, and resumed their seats, with uniform exactitude, but without speaking; after this the young lord retired to continue his search for his sister, leaving Miss Crampton in a state of extreme perplexity. She knew that this accidental mode of introduction was not in Miss Partington's programme, and that it superseded the formal meeting which was to have taken place in the "blue parlor," and which she had frequently rehearsed with her pupils.

When, alas! it was too late, the bell rang, and the governess and her girls made their progress to the blue parlor. But on entering it, instead of finding their three young guests drawn up in a row to receive them, as their aunt had arranged—the room was empty! The fact was, the earl's daughter and niece were superintending the unpacking of their toys—without which they never travelled—and when the Misses Phillips turned to the window, they beheld to their extreme astonishment the Honorable Miss Pelham on the lawn bowling a hoop! Miss Crampton was only awakened from her wonderment by the entrance of the aunt and Lord Laxington. Miss Partington was much mortified on perceiving the young guests absent, and her careful arrangements utterly disregarded. The earl, however, adroitly patched up the disappointment, by complimenting the aunt on the personal appearance of her nieces, and congratulating the nieces upon their being cared for by so accomplished an aunt. All this would have passed off satisfactorily, had not his lordship concluded his introduction to the Misses Phillips by an unlucky proposition. He begged that, by way of a treat, the young ladies and his own children may be allowed to dine with the family! So unheard-of a suggestion more than surprised the girls—it frightened them! and they cast a simultaneous look of terror upon their aunt. With her, however, the word of an earl was law, and she gave a bewildered consent. "Lunch for children!" she inwardly exclaimed. "Dangerous indulgence!" Besides, she reflected that they had never been instructed in the proper behavior for dinner—had not, in short, been put through their state-dinner-table exercise.

It happened, therefore, that when the dressing-bell rang, Miss Partington—who had already made her own toilet—was employed administering to her nieces such weighty instruction as the urgent necessity of the case demanded. They were told what to eat, and how to eat it; their drink was prescribed after the manner of the faculty—one sip of sherry and water about every fifteen minutes. In fact, so minute and various were Miss Partington's directions, that, as she followed them to the dining-room, she congratulated herself on having left nothing whatever to her nieces' discretion.

Fortunately, the early courses of the feast passed off to Miss Partington's satisfaction; for her beloved charges ate but little, by reason of an ample lunch they had made; it having been a part of their instructions to leave themselves, during dinner, as little to do as possible. Indeed, she secretly congratulated herself on the favorable contrast which their demeanor presented to that of the young guests. The latter actually ate as if dining were not a mere formal duty, but a necessity; her own young ladies, Miss Partington was glad to remark, betrayed not the smallest symptom of gratification at what they were doing, not even while the pastry was in course of mastication. The contrast, however, gave rise in Lord Laxington to far different reflections. He saw that the minds of the girls were tied and bound by rules and regulations: that they were constrained into an unnatural, and therefore unhappy mode of existence. He pitied them, and determined that, while he stayed at Primley Hall, they should enjoy as much relaxation as it was in his power to create. With this view, he proposed an excursion for the next day to a celebrated scene in the neighborhood. Miss Partington hesitated; Lady Belinda and her brother declared it was a delightful proposition; and at length it was decided that the excursion should take place.

The period had now arrived when, according to the instructions given to the Misses Phillips, they were to rise from the table of their own accord, make one, two, three courtesies, in order of seniority, and to leave the room. But the thoughts of the promised excursion affrighted their minds. Miss Partington's patience was losing the even tenor of its way, when a diversion was effected by Lord Montgomery. That young nobleman having got tired of building houses with ratafias, and manufacturing pigs out of orange-peel—after-dinner arts, in which he was a great adept—proposed that they should change the scene for a romp on the lawn! Miss Partington turned pale! "A very good thought," added the Honorable Miss Pelham; "and as we have brought the sticks and strings, suppose we commence with a game at—Devil!" At the mention of that horrible word, Miss Partington sunk back in her chair, like to a person who had been suddenly wounded. Her head swam, and she had the utmost difficulty in preventing herself from further disarranging her own programme for the day, by fainting. When she returned to her ordinary state of sedate consciousness, the whole of the juveniles had departed; perhaps her own nieces were—agonising thought!—playing at that unmentionable game; and etiquette forbade her retiring to forbid them!

The next morning there was a bustle in Primley Hall, such as had not occurred under its venerable roof since General Phillips retired from active service. The carriage stood at the door, together with Farmer Mactaggart's donkey, and one of the post-horses saddled, for the especial equestrianism of Lord Augustus Montgomery. The Misses Phillips stood in the hall dressed exactly alike in slate-color pelisses and poke-bonnets. Upon Miss Crampton's gaunt figure hung her outdoor apparel, a never-absent reticule swinging from her arm. When the whole party had assembled, they were called into the breakfast-room. "I am told," said Lord Laxington, "that although the waterfall you are going to visit can be seen without danger, yet the approach to the hermitage is extremely perilous. I must therefore request of you, young ladies," he continued, addressing himself to his daughter and niece only, "not to make any attempt to enter it. As for Augustus, being a boy, he may run into whatever dangerous adventures he chooses: if he get off with impunity, well; if not, he must abide the consequences."

"But, papa," remarked Lady Belinda, "they tell us the hermitage is by far the most interesting thing of the whole."

"And I am an excellent climber," rejoined Miss Pelham.

"You really must promise what I ask," said the earl.

The young ladies knew another word would be useless, and gave the required pledge.

Miss Partington, who stood by, mentally congratulated herself that no such caution was necessary for the young ladies under her and Miss Crampton's care and pupilage. They, the well-behaved darlings, were never let out of her or their governess's sight. Hence, for any accident to befall them from their own heedlessness, was utterly impossible.

The well-looked-after girls having severally courtesied, according to their age, entered the carriage with Lady Belinda, followed by Miss Crampton. The family vehicle rolled away in advance; the rear being brought up by Lord Montgomery on the post-hack, and the Honorable Miss Pelham on the borrowed donkey. The destination was not far distant, and the steady coachman—an old trooper in the corps of which General Phillips had been colonel—drove his precious charges deliberately and safely to the spot. The equestrians, however, made several excursions to view the beautiful scenery which presented itself in the neighborhood of their route. On joining the Misses Phillips, they spoke raptures of what they had seen, and wondered their young friends, natives of the place, were not equally charmed; but the governess explained that they were never allowed to go out without proper superintendence, and that it had never been convenient till now to spare sufficient time from their scholastic studies to visit the celebrated scenes of their native parish. Miss Pelham exclaimed: "How odd!" and tried to pull away Georgina from the firm grasp of her governess, who was leading her, but without success. Miss Phillips, however, was free, the conductress not having three hands for all her three pupils, and Lady Belinda, taking her round the waist, half-enticed and half-forced her to the bottom of the hill, to the utter dismay of the governess and the trembling sisters. Lord Montgomery and his cousin followed, and all four diving into the woods, were soon out of sight. Indeed, by the time Miss Crampton reached the spot where they had disappeared, the truants were at least half a mile distant.

"O how beautiful!" exclaimed Lady Belinda, when the first view of the waterfall burst upon them; "it is like fairy-land. One almost expects to see little elves peeping forth from between the rocks. *You* do not seem pleased, though, Miss Phillips?"

"Why—why," said that young lady with hesitation, "I've lost my governess, and aunt will be so angry!"

"Oh, never mind your governess!" Lord Augustus replied; "she is far enough away—out of sight and hearing."

"And a good thing, too," interrupted Miss Pelham. "I am sure her very look is enough to spoil one's pleasure. She is so stiff, and looks uncommonly cross."

Miss Phillips had thought the same thing of Miss Crampton a thousand times, but had never dared to express it. She did not, therefore, contradict the opinion, but addressed herself more earnestly to inquiring whether it was perfectly certain that the governess was quite too far away to hear or see what was going on. Having been conclusively satisfied on this point, Miss Phillips's manner changed with extraordinary celerity. The long-pent-up animal spirits of the pupil found full vent in the unrestrained delight of the girl.

Living, speaking, and acting by rule being a perfectly unnatural condition for children, they are, whenever drilled into that mode of existence, studiously and effectually taught to become hypocrites. This was the case with Miss Phillips. Naturally, her disposition was lively, and her spirits so high, that all the rigid schooling she had been subjected to could not break them; consequently, when the barrier of restraint was removed, they completely overflowed, and to the amazement of her companions, she laughed, talked, and romped with much less reserve than either of the more volatile young ladies; so much so, that Belinda took occasion to remark to her cousin, that "she thought Miss Phillips sometimes went too far."

"And oh, Bel," was the reply, "if her aunt were to see her now! Poor old lady, the consequences would be really shocking!"

Augustus was amazed, and apologized to Jemina for having so entirely mistaken her character. "Why," said he, "I thought you the primmest, most disagreeable, icy person I ever met with. Didn't you, Fanny?"

"As for me," remarked Fanny Pelham, "I had an idea you all lived upon starch, and had been taught that to be dumb was an accomplishment."

By this time the party rambled to the path which led to the forbidden hermitage, and they all wondered where the danger could possibly be. It was broad as far as they could see it, and, to all appearance, as easily traversed as any other path. Augustus suggested, however, that the point of danger might be where it turned abruptly upon the overhanging cliff. "At all events," he continued, "I can cross the stream a little above the fall, and see the whole thing." Accordingly, he soon appeared on the other side, and reported he could see the mouth of the cave, and that the path seemed as safe as possible.

"Then I wonder," said Miss Pelham, "why we were forbidden to go."

"That is no affair of ours," replied Belinda; "we are not to visit this mysterious hermitage, and there is an end of the matter."

"But cannot Augustus go?' He was not restricted; and then he can describe it to us. I'll ask him."

Miss Pelham called across, and her cousin replied that he would not go; for although his father did not expressly forbid the adventure, it was evident he did not wish it. "And so you see, cousin," said the sister, turning to Miss Pelham, "we must give it up entirely."

Miss Phillips wondered at all this hesitation, and at the coolness with which so desirable a project was abandoned. *She* had not been instructed either one way or the other. Governess could not see, and if her companions would promise not to tell, *she* would go and see the hermitage. Lady Belinda would give no such promise; "for," she said, "half the pleasure consists in telling papa all we have seen and done after we get home. Besides, I am quite sure I could not keep a secret."

Miss Phillips, however, determined to venture, arguing that although it was likely her papa and aunt would be angry, yet they had not expressly forbidden the attempt; and, above all, governess was not there to interdict her. Nevertheless, she felt perfectly certain that Miss Crampton would do so were she present.

"Hallo!" shouted Augustus from the other side, "are *you* going, Miss Phillips? But I would advise you to turn back; I'm sure they won't like it at home." He saw, however, that she was resolute, and advised her to take unusual care when she turned the corner, for the path sloped a little, and being bare rock, might be slippery.

This part of the path was cut upon a rock which overhung the basin into which the water fell. Jemima felt not the smallest apprehension till she arrived at the projecting point where the path turned suddenly round towards the entrance of the cave. It was only at this point that the dizzy height above the water could be distinctly seen. At the sight of it, she turned giddy, her foot slipped over the edge of the sloping path, the unfortunate girl uttered a piercing scream, and the next audible sound was the splash of her body in the water below! Augustus being directly opposite, was the only person who saw the accident; and though terribly shocked, lost no time in useless reflection. He was an expert swimmer—he clambered over the rocks with the celerity of a chamois, and when sufficiently near the river for a safe plunge, dived into the water as near to the sinking object as possible. He soon seized it. Luckily, the shock had stunned the girl; hence the rescuer was not embarrassed by that convulsive grasp of the drowning which so often proves fatal to both. He held her by the hair, keeping her head above water, and allowed the stream to carry him down to a safe landing-place.

The cousins on hearing Jemima shriek, hastened, in an agony of dread, to an opening where they could see what had happened. Lady Belinda outstripped Fanny, and her first view of the accident showed her beloved brother striking out gallantly to a shelving part of the bank. She rushed down the hill with the speed of a fawn, and was soon at the water's edge. Meantime, Miss Crampton and her two pupils arrived in their search for their lost sister at the same spot, and were so completely overpowered at what they saw, as to be totally deprived of motion, and unable to render assistance; but their shrieks were prolonged and piercing. The other young ladies, on the contrary, uttered no sound, but employed themselves more usefully. Miss Pelham having taken hold of her cousin's hand as she had requested, Belinda walked far enough into the stream to catch Jemima's dress, as she and Augustus were sweeping past, borne rapidly along by the current. By this means they were dragged on shore. In a moment the senseless girl was laid on the bank, and stripped by her female friends. Augustus galloped as fast as possible to Primley Hall. Jemima having been properly dried by Lady Montgomery and Miss Pelham, was reclothed with the superfluous garments of the rest of the party.

In all these proceedings Miss Crampton and the two young sisters were unable to afford the smallest assistance. They stood inactive, looking on and shrieking. All Miss Crampton did was in the way of expostulation on the indelicacy of her ladyship's operations. The cousins were, however, deaf to the governess, and on their way to the carriage, had the happiness to find their efforts rewarded by Miss Phillips's partial recovery. The old coachman was ordered to drive home considerably faster than he came.

It is now necesssary for us to outstrip the carriage, to note what was going on at Primley Hall where these events were taking place. General Phillips, accompanied by his sister, was showing the noble guest over their grounds, and explaining the exact regularity of all their arrangements; when having sought rest in a mathematically-contrived summer-house, the earl exclaimed: "Well, general, of the kind, I must say yours is the most complete house and grounds I have seen; but to my own taste—which may be very bad—a little less formality in your domestic arrangements would be far more agreeable."

"But where there are children, you know, Lord Laxington, it is positively necessary to keep up a system of order."

"True, but even that may be overdone. I knew, to my cost, when cornet in your regiment, my dear general, that you were a strict martinet. Yet despite your severity, we subalterns were noted for being the wildest set of fellows in the whole army. Depend upon it, young people too rigidly brought up, turn out in the end the very opposite of what was intended. When once they burst the bonds of pupilage, they abuse rather than enjoy the sweets of liberty."

"But girls, Lord Laxington"—— suggested Aunt Partington.

"Belong to human nature as well as boys, and being more delicate, should be even less severely treated. Children of either sex should not be used like machines, but as intelligent beings."

"They have so little discretion."

"Indeed! then my young folks must be prodigies; for I can confide anything to their discretion, and it occasionally astonishes me to observe how well they exercise it. But they have plenty of liberty; the only restrictions I place upon them are verbal ones, and I cannot bring a single act of disobedience against them."

"But that system, carried too far, might, I imagine, make girls unfeminine," said the general.

"Very true, and an instance exists in my niece, who had, before coming under our charge, a little too much liberty. In spite of all, however, I think of the two systems, the liberal one is the better. If you will pardon the metaphor, I prefer seeing children at ease in their slippers, than continually pinched up in stays."

Lord Laxington had scarcely uttered these words, before a servant brought a message from his son, that he wished to see him immediately. Augustus having ridden the post-horse at a gallop, was in his dressing-room, and when his fathered entered, was changing his wet clothes for dry ones. The earl, on hearing the story, congratulated him on his narrow escape, concealing with difficulty the agitation which he strongly felt. A more affecting scene immediately ensued. Lady Belinda rushed into the room, and, falling on her brother's neck, gave way to those emotions which she had mastered so long as they would have interfered with her usefulness in assisting to restore Miss Phillips. "And are you quite safe and unhurt, my dear brother?" she asked.

Augustus kissed his sister, and tried to laugh at her fears; but his heart was too full of affection, and of thankfulness to Providence for having escaped with a fellow-creature from the danger that had passed. Meanwhile, Jemima was conveyed to bed, under the superintendence of Miss Pelham, she being the only person in the house who had the full use of her wits. The truth is that the whole of the Primley Hall establishment, from Aunt Partington to the stable-boy, were quite unequal to a sudden emergency—it threw them out of their daily routine, and they became bewildered and useless.

In a few days Miss Phillips completely recovered. The cause of the accident having been minutely investigated, was traced by Aunt Partington to Miss Crampton's neglect in losing sight of her pupil. "One cannot," she remarked, "leave them safely for a moment. Children have no discretion."

Lord Laxington suggested a different cause, mainly arising from the manner in which the young lady's mind and actions till the day of the accident had been "cribbed, cabined, and confined."

"Then what would your lordship recommend?" asked General Phillips.

"In the first place," was the reply, "I would allow Miss Crampton to retire upon full pay. In the next, I recommend a long visit to Laxington, and I hereby invite you all to spend the ensuing winter under my roof. Miss Partington will, I am sure, get on amazingly well with the countess; and the Misses Phillips shall take their lessons from our governess with my daughter and niece."

Though, like most maiden ladies of her age, Aunt Partington was firmly wedded to her own opinions, yet so intense was her veneration for the peerage, that she really felt she could not take upon herself to differ from his lordship. It is due, however, to her discretion to add, that no one under the rank of an earl could have possibly convinced her.

Miss Crampton *was* discharged upon a pension. Lord Laxington paid a second visit to Primley Hall in his way back from the Highlands, and the whole family joined him in his journey to Laxington.

It was not until late in the spring of the following year that the return visit was concluded; but before General Phillips's family had again settled themselves in Primley Hall, Lady Laxington's governess had been induced to become a member of it—the countess's health having sufficiently recovered for her to travel. She accompanied her lord to the continent, with Lady Belinda and Miss Pelham. Meanwhile, the General's daughters improved rapidly under the care of the new instructress. Their intellects expanded, their dispositions improved, and although Miss Partington kept up her much-loved rigid order in the domestic arrangements, she was at length obliged to acknowledge the superiority of the ***slipper*** over the ***stay*** system of education.

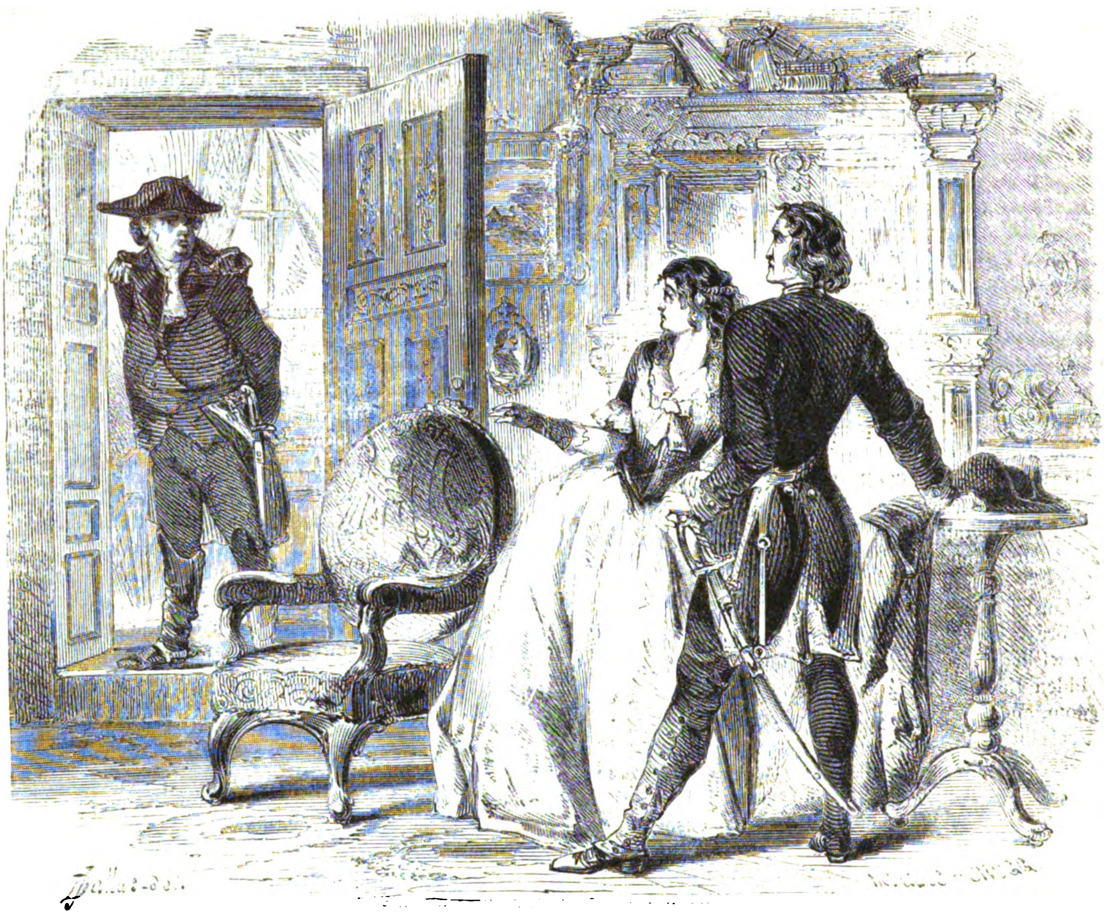
TIME'S CHANGES.

How cold and grey life seems! I tread
The old frequented beaten way;
But voices once beloved have fled,
Their music lingers not to-day.

Far off I hear the shepherd's song,
And over head the blackbird sings;
The stream leaps joyfully along;
The half-fledged sparrows try their wings.

The Spring's first green is on the trees,
The ancient trees I loved of yore;
The violet still perfumes the breeze—
All seems the same as heretofore.

But *they*, the friends of youth are gone,
And *she*, the loved one, far away—
How cold and grey life seems! Forlorn
I tread the cold and beaten way.



LOVE IN '76.

AN INCIDENT OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLANCHE DEARWOOD."

On a summer morning in the early period of the Revolution, the family of Mr. Edward Elsworth were assembled at the breakfast meal. The group consisted of four persons.

At the head of the table presided Mr. Elsworth's sister, a lady of forty, very grand, very cold, and an unquestionable old maid. Opposite, a little withdrawn from the table, sat Mr. Elsworth, with an open letter spread upon his knee.

Mr. Edward Elsworth was a retired merchant, who, failing in London, had come to America and regained his fortunes. One early passion, which through all his varied career he never forgot, was a love of rural life. At fifty years of age, therefore, finding himself rich enough, and suddenly bereaved in the death of a wife whom he had loved well for twenty-five years, he struck the last balance to his ledger, and with his family of two daughters and a sister, sought in the gratification of his early tastes consolation for his loss, and peace for his declining years.

The two daughters were Rose and Kate.

Rose is my heroine. She was young and beautiful. The incredulous reader smiles. All novel heroines are, he says. He is very right. I am well aware myself that it is the fortune of this kind of humanity to possess a monopoly of youth, beauty, and other excellent matters, and that novelists exercise a somewhat arbitrary power in bestowing upon their creations rather more of the cardinal virtues than ordinary human nature can aspire to. But for my part, I should have no idea of waiving the ancient privileges of my tribe, even if I had not the evidence of a portrait (for be it known, the lady in question is no creation of the fancy), which portrait affords the proof positive, patent to every eye, of her beauty. And not only beautiful, but my heroine was wise and witty too, as I shall prove to you.

But how shall I describe her? The portrait aforesaid rejoices in powder and ribbons, and stomacher and pearls, and so forth; but upon the occasion in which I introduce her, I prefer to consider her with a great mass of chestnut curls falling down in a thousand little ringlets over her brow and neck, for after this fashion—so tradition has informed me—she usually wore her hair, disdaining powder and pomatum. And a very piquant and fascinating style it must have been, quite suited to her roguishly-brilliant eyes, and to the delicate and perfect oval of her face.

Her eyes were dark and flashing; her mouth and chin small, her nose slightly aquiline, and her cheeks finely flushed—

"Excellently done, if God did all."

And God did all. The color upon her cheek was what her heart sent there—shifting, fading and deepening with the heart's quick emotions.

I do not like your high-toned cheeks, whose colors are fast—which show no varying tone, no transparent effects.

Kate was a little, playful, mischievous, bewitching creature, with dancing eyes, and the merriest laugh in the world.

One member of the family was absent—Lieut. Harry Elsworth, the oldest child, a graduate of Oxford, and a promising young officer in the king's service.

Mr. Edward Elsworth was courtly, polished, punctilious, fastidious, and a thorough royalist. His manners were elaborate, his costume careful and scrupulously exact. He breakfasted in powder, and surveyed his vegetable beds in lace and ruffles.

Serenely occupied in training his vines in the way they should go, in propping up his nurselings, and watching, with complacent pleasure, the growth of his orchards, Mr. Elsworth had secluded himself almost entirely from the world. The society of his family supplied his social wants; and as his neighbors were nearly all confessedly uncultivated, he very rarely exchanged courtesies with them. Thus withdrawn from the noisy highways of the world, the revolution broke upon him like a thunder-clap. He could neither understand it, nor appreciate it. A sound churchman, and full of chivalrous loyalty, he looked upon the rebellion with uncompromising bitterness and hostility.

But, in fact, I am afraid that it was the idea of liberty in homespun, that alarmed him. He was shocked at seeing boors whom he would not have admitted into his parlor, clamoring with a great want of deference, and with a rude, offensive boisterousness, for this delusion called freedom. There was a great want of respectability—that Englishman's pet word—in the whole matter. The dress, the conduct, the breeding of the rebels, were repulsive to his fastidious taste. The men of property and rank reprobated the thing altogether. It was vulgar and plebeian.

But to come back to where we started. A moment's *résumé* of the picture, reader, and then we'll at it "like French falconers."

Mr. Elsworth in a large bottomed, straight-backed chair—a cup of Java—precious luxury—within reach—perusing a letter which troubles him: behind sugar-bowl and cream-pot of quaint and valued china, shoots up like a column, the stately Miss Sarah—puffed hair, cushioned and be-ribboned—furbelows and laces, and, I think, a little rouge; Rose idly toying with a spoon; Kate absorbed with buttered toast; a pleasant, mellow light streaming through vine trellises; birds chirping without; a soft fragrant atmosphere wafted from the garden, and a glimpse of the grand old Hudson through the open window, between tree and bush, flushed with the early sun.

"Very extraordinary news!" said Mr. Elsworth, taking up the letter from his knee for the tenth time.

Everybody was on the alert. Strange rumors were continually rife, and anything like authentic intelligence, in times of so much commotion and trouble, was eagerly welcomed.

"There has been a battle."

"Good gracious!" broke simultaneously from three pairs of lips.

"On Long Island."

"Is it possible?" replied Miss Sarah Elsworth, this time having it all to herself.

Mr. Elsworth read—Washington had been defeated—had evacuated the city—was retiring northward.

"I feel," said he; "that our situation is becoming here unsafe. We are continually exposed to the assaults of marauders. It would be wiser in the present aspect of affairs, for us to seek a securer residence in New York, now so fortunately in possession of Sir William Howe."

Miss Elsworth hastened to sanction the proposal.

"I should prefer remaining here," said Rose.

"Is it safe, Rose?" said Mr. Elsworth.

"Yes," was the reply; "quite safe, for we neutralize each other. Your loyalty will secure you with the tories, and my whiggism will protect us with the other faction."

"Your whiggism, Rose! You shock me by the avowal of principles so infamous. And your brother, too, an officer of the king."

"The more need for my being a whig, or else the roof might be burnt over our heads."

"I don't think there's much danger of that," broke in Kate, with a look of demure mischief; "if Mr. Armstrong is near to protect us."

"Mr. Armstrong?" said Mr. Elsworth, turning to Kate inquiringly.

"Oh, yes, papa," said Kate, refusing to be silenced by Rose's significant look; "he's got to be a captain."

"Not a rebel, I trust."

"Not a traitor, I thank Heaven!" said Rose with a flushed cheek.

"You confound terms strangely," remarked her father; "a traitor is one false to his king."

"False to his country—I read it. A king is a creature of to-day—your country a thing of immortality."

"Your king is your sovereign by divine right and true succession."

"Then, sir, serve the Stuarts. How came the house of Hanover upon the throne?"

Mr. Elsworth looked confused, and was silent.

"You see, sir," said Rose; "that if you zealous loyalists could shift off James, we, with less belief in the divine rights of kings, can shift off George."

"For my part," said Miss Sarah, coming to the rescue of her brother, "I can not understand, Rose, what you can see in these rebels to admire. As far as my observation has gone, they are only so many boors. There was Captain Arthur. Was there ever such a dunce! He had no manner, whatever. He attempted upon one occasion to walk a minuet with me, and I really thought," said the lady, growing humorous for once; "that he was a bear accidentally stumbled into coat and slippers."

"You're quite right," replied Rose, "he never should have got his appointment until he had served a campaign in the drawing-room. If I were the Congress, I'd appoint none who could not bring diplomas from their dancing masters."

At this moment there was a knock at the door—presently a step in the hall, and then the entrance of a rather singular-looking personage, who was immediately addressed by the whole group as Mr. Metcalf.

He was very broad-shouldered, short-necked, and long-faced, so that the back of his head appeared to rest upon his shoulders, and his chin upon his breast. His eyebrows were shaggy and red; his hair short, coarse and red; his skin mottled and red. There was a twinkle of humor in his little grey eye, and an absurd look of affected gravity in the drawn-down corners of his mouth.

"Have you very late news of the war, Mr. Metcalf?" inquired Mr. Elsworth, after the visitor had accepted the seat offered him.

"News—plenty of it, and mad. The country is depopulated. There isn't a youth with the first hope of a beard upon his chin, who hasn't gone with young Armstrong to join the army."

"Young Armstrong?"

"To be sure, sir. He's turned out a fiery rebel after all—and a veritable captain to boot."

Why, what do you mean, Mr. Metcalf? What does he mean, Rose?"

"Walter, father, has gone to join Washington—and he is a captain by virtue of some service rendered Congress."

"Heaven bless me!" said Mr. Elsworth, rising, and beginning to walk the floor in agitation, "this is very sad. A promising youth to be led astray! Dear me, dear me! Rose, I am very sorry to say that this is certainly your fault. You have filled him with your wild, radical, and absurd heroic rhapsodies. You have made him disloyal to his king. You have put a dagger in his hand to stab at the heart of his country. Alas! I see what the end will be—disgrace and death, ignominy and the gallows."

Rose made no reply to this, but walked to the window.

Walter Armstrong, and his mother, were the only neighbors with whom Mr. Elsworth's family had established any familiar acquaintance. Between Harry Elsworth and Walter Armstrong a close friendship had sprung up, which was the first means of introducing Walter into Mr. Elsworth's family. Intelligent and cultivated much above his neighbors, generous, frank, and abounding with a genial and hearty humor, he soon became everybody's favorite, and very naturally between Rose and him, the idle little god, who plays such antics with us all, set mischief.

But the war came, and suddenly a gulf rolled between Walter and his friends. Walter's sympathies from the first were warmly enlisted in favor of the whigs, but he trembled at the thought that such an avowal would but too surely wreck all his hope of Rose Elsworth's love. He had not the courage to make that avowal, and, therefore, cherished his principles in secret. His inactivity and apparent neutrality exposed him to the taunts of the villagers. High-souled and fiery, this was more than he could bear. He planned and executed a brilliant exploit, which gained him an audience with Washington, and an offer of whatever reward he would accept. He begged for a commission. It was granted. He flew back to his native place, and gathered together as speedily as possible a rough, uncouth, but true-hearted company of followers.

It was now necessary to reveal his principles to Rose. To his delight and astonishment, he discovered that she was at heart thoroughly whig, and had watched his period of inaction with pain. High-spirited and heroic, these were her words:

"I should be happier, Walter, with the consciousness of your duty done, even if the consequence were your untimely death, than to see you live covered with many years and no honors."

Mr. Elsworth was sincerely attached to Walter, and the news of what he considered his defection, was a severe blow to him. In his judgment it was the greatest misfortune that could befall him.

In his daughter's, it was the greatest glory.

Miss Elsworth perceiving Rose's unpleasant position by this discussion, attempted to direct the conversation into another channel.

"Mr. Metcalf," said she, "how are your little charges?"

The gentleman was the village pedagogue.

"Caught the spirit of the rebellion, marm, and as untractable as bulls. Bless you, there isn't a lad over fourteen who hasn't abandoned his horn-book and gone off with Armstrong. And as for the girls they're greater rebels than the boys. What do you think, marm? The other day they came marching in procession, and demanded to know on which side I was. I said 'God save the King,' whereupon they fell upon me like a swarm of bees, armed with a thousand pins, and so pinched and pricked and pulled me that there wasn't a square inch of my skin that wasn't as full of holes as a ten-year old pin-cushion. And I do believe they never would have stopped if I hadn't cried, 'Huzza for Washington.'"

Mr. Elsworth smiled in spite of himself, and the joyous Kate burst into loud laughter.

"Give Mr. Metcalf a glass of wine," said Mr. Elsworth.

"Thank you, sir. It's rather early, but a glass of wine, occasionally, between the sour cider one's compelled to drink, is an oasis—decidedly."

"I hope, sir!" said Elsworth, "that you will not be compelled to follow the example of your scholars, and turn soldier."

"Never a bit, sir." Mr. Metcalf was an Irishman, with only an occasional touch of the brogue. "I content myself with teaching the young idea how to shoot, without indulging in such dangerous practices myself."

While the wine was bringing, Rose managed to escape from the room. She went out upon the piazza, and abstractedly began to walk to and fro. She saw very well that storm and contention were to shatter the peace of the household—that between her father and herself were to arise difference, opposition, and, perhaps, estrangement.

She had sworn to love Walter Armstrong. Her heart would keep that oath at every sacrifice, and to any extremity.

Profoundly absorbed, she was suddenly startled by a voice at her elbow. It was Mr. Metcalf.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Elsworth," said he, "but I've a secret word for you."

"For me? Sir!"

"From young Armstrong, marm," and he placed in her hand a folded bit of paper. Rose opened it and read:

"DEAR ROSE: I shall be near you soon on a secret mission. Can we not meet? I shall watch for you near the old walk—the one where we last met and parted! But do not be surprised if I take you unawares in some other place—even at midnight. Mr. Metcalf is my friend. You may trust him.

"WALTER."

"I am glad of this, Mr. Metcalf," said Rose. "I shall like you all the better for being Mr. Armstrong's friend."

"Oh, thank you, marm."

"I shall know where to find you when I have any message to send."

"At the sign of the birch, marm. Whenever you hear a score of throats shrieking all together at the top of the scale, you will know at once that that's the Babel where I preside."

The pedagogue bowed profoundly and backed himself off the piazza upon the lawn.

He had been gone only a few minutes, when Kate came running up, exclaiming:—

"Papa would like to see you, Rose, in his library."

"Is he there now?"

"I saw him enter."

Rose started to obey the summons, when Kate ran before her, and flung her arms around her neck.

"Rose," said she.

"Well?"

"You're looking sad. I never saw it in you before. It is so strange. Why is it?"

"Never mind."

"But oh, I want to know."

"I shall be merry again in an hour, Sis. Tell Pete to saddle our horses. We will have a ride."

"Good! good! Pete, Pete," and off the light-hearted girl bounded, eager for the promised pleasure, and with all thoughts of Rose's sadness quite forgotten.

CHAPTER II.

ROSE found her father in his library, seated in a big, roomy, state-like chair, awaiting her approach. She went over to him, and seated herself on a low stool.

"You sent for me, papa," said she.

"Yes, Rose, and on a grave matter."

"Well, sir?"

"I have reference to Walter Armstrong, Rose."

"I supposed as much, sir. I think I know what you are going to say."

"In that case, Rose, I hope that you have come here prepared to yield obedience."

"Impose no commands on me, sir, I beseech you. You yourself must admit that my obedience to you has always been rendered cheerfully and to the letter. I could wish that it should always be so. But there is one matter on which I cannot prove false to my judgment, my heart, or to that consciousness of duty within me."

"Rose, answer me plainly, are you betrothed to Walter Armstrong?"

"I am."

"And now with the stain of dishonor and crime that he has brought upon himself——"

"Father, let me interrupt you. The terms you are bestowing upon Walter Armstrong are those which he does not deserve, and such as I am not willing to hear. You must have observed, sir, the attachment that was growing up between us. You sanctioned it. You made Walter your friend, and you admitted him to your family circle because you saw that he was good, noble, and amiable. You even looked forward with pleasure to the consummation of our union. Is it right, therefore, sir, because Walter, as by every instinct and sense of honor he was impelled to do, has come forth a champion of his country in this great struggle; is it right, I say, to turn from him, and so freely brand him with dishonor?"

"It is dishonorable, Rose, to be a rebel—it is a mighty crime. Wrongs against individuals are circumscribed in their effects, but wrong against your country becomes an evil that extends its bane through centuries."

"I can understand, father, why you feel as you do. It is the most natural thing in the world for you to espouse the cause of your king. Your education, your long-treasured prejudices, your sympathies—all point that way. And so with Harry, educated in England, and nurtured into a chivalrous devotion to the king, every impulse of his heart prompts him to draw his sword upon the royal side. But not so with Walter.

As it is natural for you and Harry to sympathize with the king, so it is natural for Walter to follow these great spirits who are guiding their countrymen in their resistance against oppression. I wish, father, that you could look upon Walter's conduct in this light."

"You're no politician, girl."

"No, sir; I believe neither of us are learned in that way."

"If you justify this rebellion, revolutions will become as common as Irish riots. For every imaginary wrong armies will spring up—the opponents of every new law will find a Washington to organize their opposition."

"I know nothing about logic," said Rose; "but it seems to me to be poor argument to deny the justice of a great cause because its success would embolden unprincipled imitators. Revolutions certainly should not be entered into lightly. History will say that this was not."

"This is waste of words," said Mr. Elsworth. "I did not send for you for an argument. Rose, I cannot consent for my daughter to marry a rebel."

"If I were a giddy girl, father, you would be justified in exercising your authority. But I am a woman old enough to know my own heart—old enough not to be misled by mere fancy. I love Walter Armstrong, father. I have given a woman's promise to marry him—a woman's promise which is free."

"I would rather see you wedded to a Turk than to a disloyal wretch, insensible to the claims of his sovereign."

"This is nothing," replied Rose, bitterly, "but blind prejudice. It has neither sense nor justice."

"Girl, I will not be tutored by you," replied Mr. Elsworth, rising quite excited. "I sent for you to express my disapprobation of your connection with Walter. My commands upon the matter are explicit. I forbid you to marry him."

"Sir! Father!"

"Understand me, girl. I decline to continue the argument. My meaning is clear enough."

Mr. Elsworth walked the floor rapidly, seeking in excitement and action the courage he evidently lacked to carry him through the scene.

"Moreover," resumed he, "we shall leave this place and return to town. Here we are exposed to the marauding and brigandary attacks of your apostles of liberty. When the people come back to their senses we can return."

He turned upon his heel, and abruptly left the room.

Rose flung herself into a chair, and leaned her face upon her hand. She was not surprised at the result of the interview. It was what she had expected and dreaded, but now that it had come, she experienced how inexpressibly bitter it was.

Rose's heart rebelled against the injustice of her father's decision with more bitterness and feeling, because the love between Walter and herself had been fostered by him—encouraged and smiled upon by him.

He had fanned the flame, and now capriciously sought to extinguish it. But it blazed up beyond the power of his breath. It lived a thing of power and pride, of strength and courage, and could not be controlled.

For more than an hour Rose sat musing—painfully musing upon the clouds and the darkness which seemed sweeping down over her future, when her reverie was interrupted by Kate's bursting into the room, declaring that the horses had been waiting ever so long, and why didn't she come?

The ride proved a wearisome one. In vain did Rose put her horse to his speed. The canter failed to animate her spirits, or to dispel the gloom that settled upon them. She was glad to return, and be rid of Kate's high spirits, which fell discordantly upon her heart.

Some hours later in the day, as she was seated alone in one of the lower rooms, a cloaked figure approached the window, and leaped into the room. It was Walter Armstrong, who, tearing off his cloak, ran up to Rose with extended hands.

"Why, Walter," exclaimed Rose, as she received a warm salutation upon the cheek from Walter's lips, "I'm so very glad to see you. How you look. Brown as a nut, and so like a soldier!"

"With a soldier's appetite, Rose. I've neither ate nor drunk since midnight."

"Wait," said Rose, "I'll bring you refreshments myself. Ah, Walter, now you are my hero! I must hear all your adventures. But I'll be back directly."

Rose soon returned with sandwiches and wine, and Walter fell to consuming them with a vast relish, while Rose drew up to his side.

Walter Armstrong was nearly six feet in height; slight and symmetrical of build; his manner full of unrestrained grace; his face frank and open in expression; his eye full of playful vivacity, and upon his lips there reposed an expression of mingled power and sweetness. His brow white, well-formed, and square at the temples, to which of all brows commend me, over which his brown locks curled with an artistic grace. In short, my hero was no less a handsome man, than my heroine was a beautiful woman.

"Now, Walter," said Rose, when his appetite began to wane, "I must have a history of your doings; and you recollect you promised me, when next we met, to tell me all about that marvellous and secret adventure of yours, which tumbled you into a captaincy so suddenly. Shall I have it now?"

"If you wish it, certainly. You know, Rose, how at first I concealed my whiggish principles from you, fearing the consequences of an avowal, but you do not know how in secret I fretted and raved at the weakness which kept me at your side. While in this state of mind an unexpected opportunity was afforded me of doing our cause a decided service. I seized upon it at once, determined to make amends for my past inactivity by a brilliant exploit, and if the loss of your hand was the consequence, to find what compensation I could for such a calamity in the fame attending the adventure. In brief, I resolved at once to come out boldly a rebel—and to signalize my advent by a bold and brilliant stroke. An English officer, high in rank, was encamped with his troop at a certain locality. The officer's head-quarters were in a farmhouse, and his troop were in possession of the outhouses, and bivouacked in the meadows and fields. This officer I happened to know was peculiarly obnoxious to Washington. One day I proposed a plan to three or four whom I could trust, for his capture. My plan was acceded to, and we prepared to put it in execution. Choosing a dark night, we managed to get by the sentinels by crawling upon our stomachs through the tall grass of a meadow. This was very laborious and difficult. We then had to creep cautiously along a stone wall, and watch a chance to dart rapidly across a space of about a hundred yards to the deep shadow of a huge tree that stood directly by the house porch. There was a sentinel stationed at this point, whose walk extended about fifty feet to and fro. It was when his back was towards us that we took the opportunity, one by one, of darting to the tree, where we huddled behind the trunk. At last, at a preconcerted signal, we sprang upon him, gagged him before he could cry out, and bound him hand and foot. Entrance to the house was easily gained—we went into the room of the sleeping officer, dragged him from his bed, compelled him to silence by the threatening looks of our weapons, bore him off, made a rush between the sentinels, and notwithstanding they discharged their weapons at us, we mounted our steeds and scampered off before pursuit could be made. There's my story, Rose, in the rough. I must confess that I have a fondness for such hair-brained adventures, and—a secret in your ear, Rose—am bound on one now."

Scarcely had the captain ceased speaking, when Kate came hurrying into the room, out of breath, and incoherently exclaiming that a party of soldiers were approaching,

"Red or blue?" cried Walter.

"Bless me, Mr. Armstrong! You here? Why, I didn't see you. You'd better look out, sir, for they are red coats, and there's a big number of them too."

"I must vanish," said he, running to the window, and then instantly retreating, "Why, we're surrounded. To the north of the house, quick, Rose. That's near the wood. Perhaps I can reach it. My fellows are waiting for me a mile below."

They all hastened in the direction indicated, but to their dismay they were just in time to see a company of horse come sweeping around between them and the forest.

"What will you do?" said Rose.

"I believe I'm caged, that's certain. And I've no disposition to be caught, either. If they should know me for the fellow who served them the trick I was describing to you, an hour's time would suffice for them to make me an ornament to one of your old oaks on the lawn—a style of decoration that might suit their taste, but which wouldn't accord with my fancy at all."

"Do they know your person?"

"From description, probably."

"We must conceal you, then."

"If you've a rat-hole in which you can crowd me. After dark, probably, I can steal away."

"Up stairs, then, quick," exclaimed Rose. Up stairs they flew, and upon reaching the steep-peaked garret, crowded with broken furniture, and the usual accumulations of a household, Rose said:

"They will not suspect a concealed whig in my father's house, so here I think you will be safe."

"I wonder who they are—what command," said Walter. "Can we get a peep at them any how?"

"Yes, down upon your knees, and you can reach those little lights."

Walter crawled to the little foot-high lights that were set in front beneath the cornice of the building, and by this means could survey the lawn and road beneath. He withdrew after a moment's close scrutiny.

"Major Cleveland," said he.

"Cleveland," exclaimed Rose. "I know him. We met at a ball."

"The man of men," replied Walter, "who itches to get hold of my insignificant person."

"Lie close here," said Rose, "and I do not think there will be any danger. I must descend or my father will be searching for me. Come Kate. Keep up your spirits, Walter. I'll manage soon to smuggle you, by Kate's aid, some wine and biscuit."

Rose and Kate went out quietly and cautiously for fear of being overheard and seen. As they were descending the stairs they met a servant sent by their father in search of them, and with a summons for them to appear in the drawing-room.

CHAPTER III.

With head uncovered Mr. Elsworth stood upon the wide piazza before his house, receiving Major Cleveland and officers. The command was a company of dragoons, who were drawn up on three sides of the house.

"My dear Major Cleveland," said Mr. Elsworth, "let me welcome you zealously to this abode."

"A great many thanks, my dear Elsworth," replied the Major, as he mounted the steps of the piazza. He was short and stout, with a very pompous air, puffed up and over red cheeks, and dressed with a good deal of coxcombry.

"I am delighted," resumed he, "to meet so true-hearted a loyalist. We pushed our march, sir, in order to partake of your hospitality."

"Will you enter the house, sir? The other gentlemen, I presume, will soon join you."

Major Cleveland assented, and Mr. Elsworth, led the way to the drawing room.

Rose was already in the room when they entered. She rose as the gentleman entered, and Major Cleveland, whose gallantry to ladies was notorious, with many bows and more airs, saluted her.

"It gives me infinite pleasure, Miss Elsworth, to meet you once again, for the recollection of the occasions we have met previously, are bright spots in my memory. Permit me also, my dear madam, to express how delighted I am to find that time, who deals so inexorably with us, has been won to favor you."

"Oh, sir, I thank you," replied Rose.

"The old Father with his scythe and glass," resumed the major, who delighted in framing poetical compliments, "is a gallant, lady, equal to the best of us. For you his sands do not run."

"If you, sir, were Time's prime minister, your assurances would have more weight."

"I wish it were so, and then I would endow the ladies with perpetual youth."

Rose laughed.

"Very pretty indeed, sir."

"And how comes on the loyal cause," inquired Mr. Elsworth; "will it be long ere these rebels are taught their duty to their king?"

"Have no apprehensions, my dear Elsworth," replied the major; "another campaign will scatter them to the mountains, and a live rebel be so great a curiosity, that to cage one and exhibit him would make a showman's fortune."

"If he knew there was a caged one here now," thought Rose, "how the major would stare."

"But where are your companions? I must see why they have not followed you," said Mr. Elsworth.

"They are delayed for a moment with the troop. They will be with you presently. By the bye, Miss Elsworth, I believe that there are a couple of gentlemen without, who are old admirers of yours—Captain Arbald and Lieutenant Marvin."

"Old, major! you flatter my taste."

"Why, with beauty I thought the conquest of the morning stale matter by night."

"Oh, sir, if staleness go to make their age, they should be proverbed instead of Methuselah."

"They were fascinated with you. My word for it, they would die for you."

"So they once told me, but I courtesied, and replied that I should prefer a live rebel to even two dead loyalists."

"And then," said the major, with a fascinating smile.

"They vowed to live for me. I begged of them to put themselves to no such inconvenience; that I wouldn't trouble them to do anything of the kind; that if they didn't think it worth while to live for themselves, I shouldn't intrude upon any suicidal intention they might entertain."

"And so they lived," said the major, laughing heartily and with great glee.

"But I had no hand in it," exclaimed Rose, "I am innocent; I clear my skirts of the melancholy fact."

"They are noble gentlemen, Miss Elsworth. You must bear with me if I defend them. They are good soldiers, and fine noble looking fellows."

"For which I thank their tailor."

"And decidedly witty," continued the major.

"Then they've been studying the almanac," cried Rose, who was giving the free rein to her humor; "when I saw them last they hadn't a grain, not even by scratching."

"Really, Mr. Elsworth," replied the major, who appeared heartily to enjoy Rose's home thrusts, "your daughter has been schooling herself for a sharp tongue."

"That is her pride, sir. Her passes are but play."

"I'll be sworn her heart is as true as her wit. She is——"

"Rebel, sir, from top to toe!" broke in Rose, with almost vehement emphasis.

Major Cleveland stared, and Mr. Elsworth fidgetted nervously, but at this moment the door opened, and several officers were ushered in. At the same moment, at the other end of the apartment, Miss Sarah Elsworth and Kate entered, followed by a waiter bringing wine and refreshment.

Presentations and introductions followed, and Captain Arbald and Lieutenant Marvin came up to pay their respects to Rose.

"Gentlemen," said she, "my best welcome. My father is proud to receive you."

"You do not know, gentlemen," said the major, coming up, "what pleasant things Miss Elsworth has been saying about you."

The coxcombs both smirked.

"They would have quite delighted you, I'm sure."

They bowed, tried to say something peculiarly elegant—and failed.

"Gentlemen," said Major Cleveland (holding a glass of wine in his hand), "I hope you will all fill and honor the toast I am going to propose."

The gentlemen filled. The ladies stood up.

"The ladies! Speedy priests and rings!" said the major, with a gallant bow.

"A doubtful compliment, Major Cleveland," said Rose, when the toast was drunk.

"Can you think so, Miss Elsworth? Marriage would be a paradise for at least one happy man."

"Ah, sir, marriages, though called matches, are mostly but sad patch-work."

"I rejoice to hear you say so. Unmarried you are a star which all the world can worship."

"An old maid, sir! Of many evils that would be the worst. Old maids and old bachelors are only the odds and ends of humanity."

"The happiest wit, madam, I ever heard," exclaimed the major, evidently quite fascinated, going over to her side, and speaking in a low tone.

Excited by the danger of her lover, Rose was giving way to a feverish and unrestrained mirth—to a temperament like hers, the natural consequence of an attempt to conceal the inward fear and apprehension she was experiencing.

"Really, Mr. Elsworth," said the major, "with your permission, I am urged to impose on your hospitality longer than I had first intended. There are charms here difficult to withdraw from. Have I your permission to postpone our further march until to-morrow?"

Rose started, and for an instant evinced some little apprehension.

"I shall only be too proud, sir," said Mr. Elsworth, "to entertain the king's officers as long as they will consent to make use of my roof."

"And what, sir," said the major, seized with a sudden idea, "if I should go further, and propose an extemporized ball. I do not forget that I first met your daugh ter at such an entertainment. These gentlemen have so long encountered bullets and muskets, they are eager for an engagement with bright smiles and flashing eyes."

"A ball!" cried Rose, in utter dismay; "why, sir, you'd have to pit coat against coat. Where are your ladies?"

"Oh, we'll drum them up. There are a dozen families within as many miles, and these gentlemen would ride a steeple chase with a dance as the goal. Trust me, they'll hunt out enough."

"A mad idea," said Rose.

"A wild one, I confess," returned the major, "but who would not pluck what flowers he could in the midst of many harsh and stern duties."

"And moreover," said Mr. Elsworth, "it would be a suitable festivity in honor of our recent Long Island victory. I only hesitate, sir, because of the incompleteness of our preparations."

"We only ask a dance, sir, nothing else."

"I will order the horses to my carriage immediately," said Mr. Elsworth, "to dispatch in whatever direction you may decide."

"Then, gentlemen, to horse! Ho, for merriment! Hunt up the petticoats. You, Arbald and Marvin, are keen of scent—away with you!"

In an instant all was spirited preparation and activity. Mrs. Elsworth descended to the kitchen, and directly servants began running in every direction, with dusters, glasses, china, orders, counter-orders, and so forth; vast culinary machinery straightway became in operation; and the thousand and one things began to be done and undone, which housekeepers always find so necessary upon these occasions.

Rose flew to her own room, and locked herself in. What would become of Walter, and what ought to be done for Walter, were the problems she was striving to solve. In vain did she seek for a plan by which he might escape undetected from the house. Everything which suggested itself seemed too hazardous. At last, after entertaining and rejecting a dozen different schemes, she went out, and stole secretly up stairs to Walter's hiding-place.

She entered, and to her dismay found that he was not there. He had escaped, but how—and was he yet beyond danger? She hurried down again to her room and to the windows. Nothing was in sight. With an excitement of manner she vainly endeavored to control, she hurried to the lower floor, and upon entering the dining-room, to her astonishment found him there.

"Are you mad?" exclaimed Rose, "back to your hiding-place!"

"No, Rose, I shall not go."

"Why—what—not go back—"

"Hear me, Rose. After you concealed and left me, a few moments' reflection convinced me that I was doing a great wrong to your father in permitting myself to be concealed upon his premises. I am a proscribed man. I am what is called a spy. My concealment here compromises your father. If I were discovered, the consequences to him would be severe. I cannot consent to expose him to those consequences. I would rather openly deliver myself into Major Cleveland's hands."

"Foolish man! You are ruining all. Walter, for my sake go back again. This is a ridiculous and false sense of honor."

"No, Rose, I am resolved."

"Walter, I implore you. 'Tis death to remain here——"

Rose was standing with her back to the door, which in her confusion and surprise she had left wide open. Walter's face was turned towards it. In the midst of her impetuous remonstrance, Rose saw her lover give a sudden start at something over her shoulder. She turned quickly—

Major Cleveland was standing in the doorway looking at them.

(To be continued.)

EUREKA!

I had a dream of life—
But it was dreamt upon a weary night!
Ah, me! I was a sad and wretched wight,
Oppressed with hopeless strife!

I saw the flowers bloom—
They seemed only wreathed crowns for Death:
And the fair world wherein he wandereth
Seemed but Life's earthly tomb!

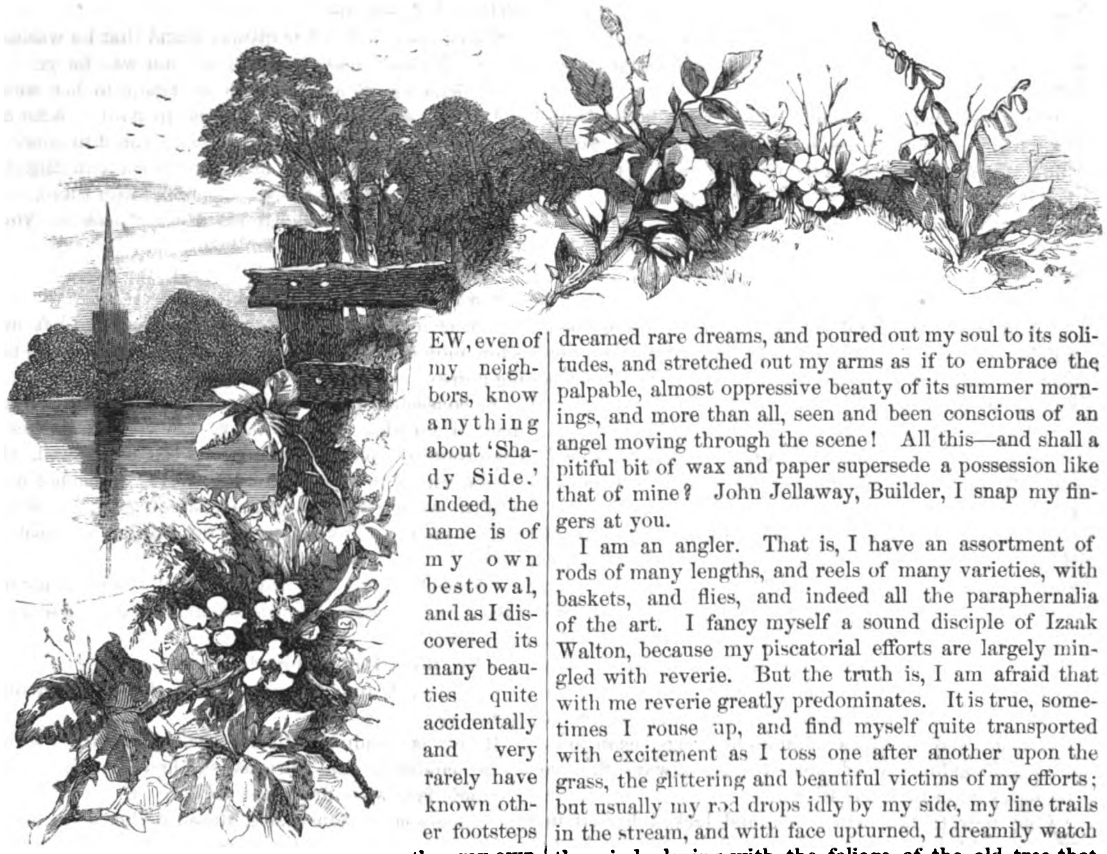
To me no joy was given—
Others were happy in their homes below;
But mine was built of grief and fenced with woe,
And was not roofed by Heaven!

Till once I marked the sun
E'en with his godlike glory cast a shade:
Then soon I knew 'twas earthly things that made
Life's path a darkened one:

And that above the cloud,
And that beyond the overshadowing mountain
Light gushes from its ever-flowing fountain,
And Life is sunny-brow'd!

Then from beyond the Dead
Came Angel Hope; she set my spirit free—
She bade dark unbelief for ever flee—
And he for ever fled!

“THE SHADY SIDE.



FEW, even of my neighbors, know anything about ‘Shady Side.’ Indeed, the name is of my own bestowal, and as I discovered its many beauties quite accidentally and very rarely have known other footsteps than my own to press its sod, why should I hasten to obtrude into publicity a treasure which has been neglected simply because unappreciated? Even lovers have not found it out. The moonlight that glistens upon the rippling stream and sleeps so softly and sweetly upon the green bank, has but rarely heard the whispered prattlings of affection. And if love, which so delights in shadowy glades, and silent paths, and mossy banks, and woodland rambles, has found no beauty in this spot, how can I expect the prosier part of humanity to pause and taste its sweets? But, indeed, I do not expect or desire it. I rejoice that its seclusion is so perfect, and I wander up and down, in and out, with a certain sense of mastership, as if I were monarch of the scene. It does not occur to me that it is the property of John Jellaway, Builder. Indeed, if John Jellaway, Builder, should appear some day, and lay his hands upon one of these old trees, and call it his, I should ignore title-deeds and all such miserable red tape affairs, and defy John Jellaway, Builder, to his face. How, indeed, by the sweet sunlight, and the flowers and the green sward, came it to be his? Have I not rolled upon the grass, and lain my head upon the rocks, and climbed the trees, and listened by the hour to the carol of the birds, and watched the play of light and shadow, and looked down upon the blue bright waters, and listened to its low musical flow, and dreamed rare dreams, and poured out my soul to its solitudes, and stretched out my arms as if to embrace the palpable, almost oppressive beauty of its summer mornings, and more than all, seen and been conscious of an angel moving through the scene! All this—and shall a pitiful bit of wax and paper supersede a possession like that of mine? John Jellaway, Builder, I snap my fingers at you.

I am an angler. That is, I have an assortment of rods of many lengths, and reels of many varieties, with baskets, and flies, and indeed all the paraphernalia of the art. I fancy myself a sound disciple of Izaak Walton, because my piscatorial efforts are largely mingled with reverie. But the truth is, I am afraid that with me reverie greatly predominates. It is true, sometimes I rouse up, and find myself quite transported with excitement as I toss one after another upon the grass, the glittering and beautiful victims of my efforts; but usually my rod drops idly by my side, my line trails in the stream, and with face upturned, I dreamily watch the wind playing with the foliage of the old tree that canopies me, or else I stretch my gaze beyond into the far blue, while my thoughts mount, expand, traversing worlds celestial and terrestrial.

But I must describe “Shady Side” more fully to you. It is the richly wooded bank of a little, devious, romantic stream, which, sometimes dark, narrow, and turbulent, at others is soft and rippling in its flow; at one time dashing fiercely with froth and foam down rocky descents, rushing on with a hiss and a roar, almost immediately to subside, and a little farther on to softly murmur among the meads, and lift up its lips to the kiss of the flowers. The bank itself is covered with a rare old growth of trees, a turf in places almost park-like in greenness and smoothness, but with occasional wild and tangled masses of brush and shrubbery. The trees interlace above so closely, that a darkened, and solemn cathedral-like aspect prevails below. The light chequers the sward in ever-shifting play, but sometimes comes down through an opening in a rich and mellow flood. The surface of the bank is uneven, sometimes precipitous and abrupt to the stream, sometimes sloping gently and greenly down to the very edge. The trees, many of them, stretch far over the stream, and the willows droop their pendant branches until they just touch the surface. The opposite bank is unwooded, abrupt and rocky in places, but mostly of swelling meadow, green and sunny, with a far prospect dotted with cottages, orchards, gardens, and bounded by mountains whose tops mingle with the sky.

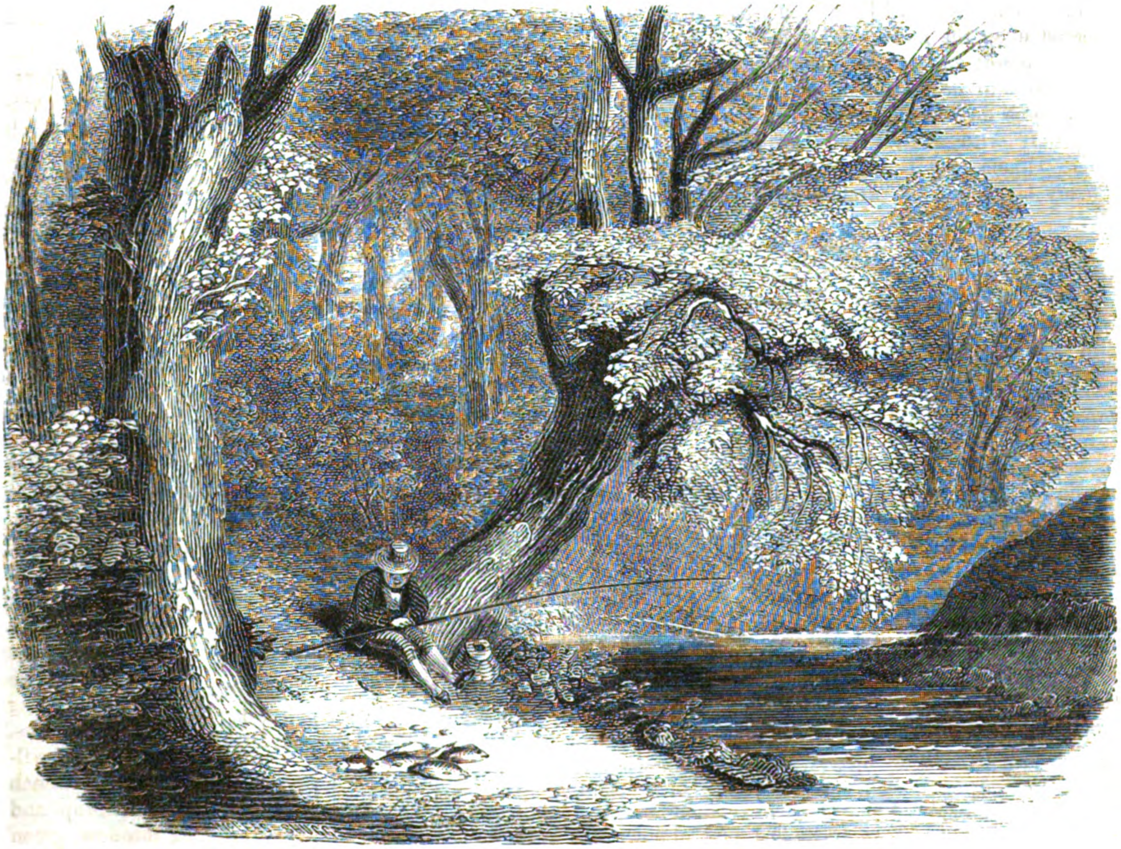
I live away from the bank nearly a mile distant. Emerging from the wood, I cross divers fields and meadows—then a marsh, then a hill, then I dust my feet along the highway a little distance—then I strike into a narrow stretch of forest, and leave the road dust behind me—then through a lane, over a fence, into a pasture—then into a garden, and I lift the latch which calls me master. My cottage is a long, low stretch of pine, painted to a dun brown—which dun brown was only accomplished by vast courage and resolution. Didn't the town painter, and the town carpenter, and town conclaves generally, protest and declare that white (or red) was the only proper, legitimate, Christian-like color for a pine cottage? To be sure they did, but the dun brown was accomplished in the face and to the scandal of high and low, far and near. This, however, was a score of years ago. They tell me now that in some places the sometime passion for white paint is dying out. Blessed be the painters!

My cottage is occupied by two dogs, three cats, a guinea hen, two rabbits, a peacock, a community of ducks and chickens, a pony, a pair of doves, an Irishman, and Molly his wife. I have a fondness for dumb creatures, and surround myself with them. I give them free access to my domicil. They pass in and out without restraint. Even the pony will saunter in leisurely, and more than once I have suddenly found his head thrust over my shoulder into the book in my hand. The affection of these creatures warms into my heart. Their sympathy sometimes appears almost human.

When I speak of dumb creatures, I am inclined to include the Irish pair in the category. Blundering, dull, ignorant, with very little that I can detect above my dogs in intellect, they are like my dogs in faithfulness, honesty, and devotion. Pat and Molly may grope, and blunder, and stumble on through their duties, guided by what light their affection affords them, I shall never utter complaint at their shortcomings. If ever I detect a dawn of smartness, however, I shall be sorely tempted to discharge them. But I do not think that is possible. They are too old for any such misfortune.

No other beings live within or around my cottage. It is full of books, which to me are almost human—more than friends, because their sympathy stands the test of every storm and adversity. There are two of them which are my own offspring—children of my fancy, and who shall blame me if I love them well?

Once—but that was an absurd fancy—I thought it possible to bring unto my lone bachelor life one who would shed perpetual day upon my household. It was strange that I should think of falling in love—if I did fall in love. Can a man of forty love a girl of sixteen?



I do not know. Love is supposed to belong only to youth and beauty. I have neither—and yet—but you shall see.

One day as I was seated "under an oak whose antique root peeped out," there came down through the trees a young girl with her bonnet on her arm, her locks lifted and floating in the wind, a bright flush upon her cheeks, a bright and beautiful light in her blue eyes, a bright and radiant smile upon her lips. She paused and threw up her hands to catch a pendant bough. Her white arms gleamed above her head, her white neck shone through the falling tresses. I thought it a rarely beautiful picture, and held my breath to look. Her form was light but full of wonderful grace; her bust was outlined with delicate fullness; her limbs, traceable through their drapery, seemed perfect in their symmetry.

She came down to the water, starting as she saw me, and blushing with beautiful confusion. I said a word or two to her, and she went on her way. All the rest of that day I found myself musing upon this beautiful vision. I dreamed of her at night, and awoke thinking of her. We met again the next day, and after that many times. We came to know each other well, and to pass hours together upon the banks of Shady Side. Beatrice was her name. She was the only child of a gloomy, taciturn gentleman, a widower, who had come up from town to settle amid the rural beauties of our neighborhood. She was very fair, trustful, pure, gentle, loving—could I have been a mortal not to have verged upon the flowery precipice? When she would speak so soft and low, or place her hand in mine, or look up into my face with her frank, sweet eyes, or play some girlish prank, such as crowning me fantastically with flowers and oak garlands, as if she were Titania, and I Bottom—could I help the bound to my heart, and the strange thrill that went through it?

But I did penance for these heart-bounds. "Hi, old fellow," said I, "look in the glass. What do you see there? Is *there* a face for sweet sixteen? Look at the crow feet, sir—at the furrows and the wrinkles, and the hair and beard already pepper and salt! Is that a face for beautiful Beatrice?"

I winced a little, but I rigorously enforced myself to study the looking-glass every day.

"You're old, old boy, old and ugly, too. Your heart is choked with the ashes of old, dead sensations; it has burnt out its fire long ago. Shall you take a withered heart, and a withered face, and dead hopes, and sluggish brain, and tainted blood, to the pure, fresh, unstained youth of Beatrice? Out upon you, old boy! Don't you see how monstrous the thought is? Look close in the looking-glass, and you will see it fully."

This plan was a happy one. It cured me of all thoughts of loving Beatrice, and kept down into the recesses of my heart, emotions and passions that otherwise would have struggled up. Occasionally, indeed, at some word of hers, or some sweet caress—for we grew to know each other well and freely—my heart would rise in my throat, and the blood run tingling through my veins, but a rigorous course of looking-glass always succeeded in subduing the rebellious sentiment.

Indeed, I grew to be so completely a master of what threatened at one time to be a mighty passion, and had buried my love so deeply in my bosom, that I listened one day to her frank, ingenuous confession of her betrothal to another, with no other outward emotion than a sensible paleness, which I felt spreading over my cheek. A sharp, keen blade was entering my heart as she spoke, but I kissed her on her brow, perhaps with trembling lips, and hastened away from her side. It needed all my courage, and a pertinacious, resolved, philosophical contemplation of the looking-glass that day to preserve the command over my emotions. I kept repeating, as if it were a text—

"You're old, old boy, old and ugly, too!"

I recalled, too, Goethe's plan, who, upon the occurrence of any calamity, betook himself forthwith to the study of a new science. But, it was sternly difficult to follow the cold abstrusities of a science, with visions of what might have been—of trusting, up-looking, confiding love ever at my side, nestling in my heart—of a radiance upon my hearth-stone, where only a shadow was now forever to rest—of sunlight in my heart which now could never more enter—with visions of youth, and bloom, and beauty thrusting themselves between me and the page! I was weaker than Goethe. The study afforded me no oblivion. I paced my floor that night until the dawn broke into my room, and then I buried my face in my pillow, and half slept, half dreamed away an hour or two.

In the morning, I breakfasted before the looking-glass, and I sternly said, "Old and ugly! What presumption to think of love! Study it well, old boy; it is your only cure."

The wedding-day came, and I stood up in church, very calm and very passive, to see the ceremony. Every eye was strained to see the bride enter; she came, and her course led her within a few feet of me. The church grew suddenly dark as she swept by. A book dropt from my hand. I could neither see nor hear.

It was over, and the crowd passed out. I followed staggeringly, and when I reached the porch the bride came up—so rarely beautiful—called me her old friend, and asked my blessing. I pressed back her curls, gave the last kiss, and took the last look. Then the crowd came in between us, the old church tottered, sky and earth were commingled, and I grasped at a column for support.

I hardly knew what followed, except that I found myself shortly afterwards hastening through the fields with a wild, irregular step, pausing mechanically to stare up at the sky, following the devious zig-zag fences abstractedly, until at last I came to the old familiar Shady Side. I flew to the water-side, threw myself down upon the bank, pulled my hat over my brows, and for once allowed the pent up grief to break, unchained and free.

The next morning I brought out a rod, clapped a small glass in my pocket, went down to the old spot, threw my hook to the stream, and taking out the aforesaid glass, read myself a lesson, while with one eye I watched my reel.

"Old boy! Sentiment and passion at your time of life, hey! A pretty how to do, upon my word! You're a man of the world, I should think. Because you met a pair of pretty eyes, and a bright smile, and a peachy cheek, you thought they were for you, hey? And now you'd like to be melancholy and sentimental, and prate about unrequited affection, I suppose. You are an old fool if you do. Shake it off, sir. It was only a dream. Wake up, rub your eyes, dash your head in water—it will be all over with. You were weak, yesterday. You must shake and tremble like a girl, or a schoolboy. Bah! Can't you see beauty or loveliness without thinking they must belong to you? What are you, old, dull, senseless block, that you should dare hope for so much? Keep along with your books, and your rods, and your dogs, and don't ever aspire to so much happiness again. It wouldn't be wise. You'd only be dropped down upon earth as harshly as now. Be a man—that is, grub—make money, love stocks, count shares, pile up acres, take to Wall street—after the manner of manhood! But don't think of beauty and youth again, old boy!"

My line suddenly shot out. Away went the glass over my head, and I sprang to my feet. A bouncer was on my line, that was certain. Now for my skill. Love and such folly, avaunt! What are you to the glorious sport at hand? The fish, a splendid fellow, was safely landed, and I went back to the looking-glass. It was shivered into a hundred pieces.

"Never mind, old boy!" said I, "You're old and ugly, you know, and you'll never be guilty of such folly again! Your passion is shivered as the glass is, as your foolish dream was!"

NELLIE'S ILLUSIONS.

If ever there was a happy, bustling, comely little woman, it was Ellen Fairfield, when the first time for twelve hours she seated herself beside her bright hearth, and looked into the clear fire, with a positive certainty that everything was done, everything prepared for the eventful morrow.

Ellen—no, let us call her Nellie at once, for that was her pet name, and no one ever said Ellen after a single day's acquaintance—Nellie was now at housekeeping; it was the first Christmas eve she had ever spent in her own house, the first Christmas dinner she had ever prepared for, on her own responsibility. This was being married, indeed; and there was that husband of hers, sitting on the other side of the fire, reading away as if unconsciously as if there was nothing in it, as if any one was equal to such a task, as if Christmas puddings came down from heaven ready made, and mince pies grew in the garden. Another time Nellie might have gone to him, coaxed the book out of his hands, insisted on his taking off those odious spectacles, and claimed his attention, while she bewildered his intellect with an account of frightful perils and narrow escapes which had befallen her in the domestic arena. Not that he took in a word of it at all: he only understood that he had a dear little wife, whose fair face, upturned with animated glance, was a pleasanter page to read than the rarest author on his well-filled shelves, and comprehended that she was a very fairy in household management, inasmuch as she never scolded, did everything quietly, and religiously abstained from setting his books and papers to rights.

But Nellie was too dignified to chat to-night; she felt that even her husband was unworthy a confidence he could so little appreciate; no one but a woman could sympathize in all the conflicts and triumphs of that day; many of them must die unrecorded, but others to-morrow would show what they were: and then Carry and Margaret would be there; they were not like Robert, they knew what it was! She had a clear half hour before the coach brought them, however; and, as there was nothing more to be done, she seated herself as we have said, and gradually fell into a musing review of the last two years of her life, and the circumstances that had combined to fix her happy lot in that pleasant, simple home.

There are few memories that are not sad ones; for if they are of pleasant hours, those hours are gone for ever; and if of sorrow, there is a scar upon the heart, which burns afresh when touched.

To judge by the cloud gathering over that smiling brow, by the gradual closing of lips generally parted, as if the heart within were ready to disclose itself, the drooping of lashes on the round rosy cheeks, Nellie's memories are very sad ones indeed. We have a right to know them, Nellie—what are you thinking of?

The old, old home, where the first prayer was lisped at a mother's knee; the dear spot hallowed by such sweet childish memories, remembered always as in an atmosphere of Spring; sunshine, and flowers, darkened only by thought of death, when they who made it home were hidden from the orphan's gaze in the tomb—the old, old home, when they parted from it, never to behold it again, conscious that strangers' footsteps would wear out the tracks they had trodden, and sweep away traces mingled with their dearest love.

Two large tears gather slowly on Nellie's lashes. an offering on that happy evening to the beloved dead, to the sacred past.

Now comes another phase, a memory of one who wronged her young heart, won its love, and flung it idly by; the warm proud flush dries the tear, and a flash steals out from the downcast eyes. Nellie, the heart that is so angry still, is hardly healed of its love-wound! She flies the thought as she fled from him. In fancy she leaves again the wealthy home where he had crossed her path, rejects dependence on rich relations, for harder dependence on a grudging, poor one: that was a hard trial, Nellie, but it was bravely borne, and it has led thee here. Those long solitary walks of thine, intended to drive away the bitter thoughts that thronged the heart's still chambers, how little couldst thou dream, when they were first crossed by that strange, thoughtful-looking man, that he would be all to thee one day, the consoler of the past, the object of the present, the guide of the future. A strange thing is life, Nellie; and it is well sometimes for the prettiest and happiest even to lay a small round chin in the palm of a soft white hand, and ponder on it, as thou art doing now. It was those primroses that did the mischief first (that such innocent-looking flowers should so demean themselves!) didn't they grow in such an unattainable spot, that when Nellie had climbed up there, she could not get down again, but was obliged to accept the extended hand, proffered by Mr. Fairfield?

Nellie did it, blushingly indeed, but still she thought such an old gentleman it could not matter; and so she suffered him to walk by her side that day, and many other days when they met, until she discovered suddenly that he was not so old after all, and that her walks were very lonely when she did not happen to meet him.

Nellie would have repulsed him angrily, had he made love to her. The wounds in her heart were too recent, and fancy's ideal still too vividly engraved there, to be displaced quickly, and by such a man, too, as Robert Fairfield; but he contrived to get possession of everything else, if he had not love; he opened the rich stores of his mind for her improvement; he won her confidence, her esteem, her friendship; and at last, when she had accompanied his mother, such a dear old lady as she was, to the lonely cottage he inhabited, and seen how desolate it looked for want of a woman to take care of it, and set it to rights, pity finished off the business, and Nellie suffered Robert to take her hand in his, and promised at the altar to be a true and loving wife.

She had never once repented of it. Busy, merry little creature that she was, she not only seemed to be making honey all day long, but always had a quantity on hand for immediate consumption; and the prettiest cottage in the village had become, thanks to her clever hands, the neatest and most tasteful. Robert said so, and his mother said so, and so did the neighbors; and as strangers always stood and peeped in as they passed by, it was to be presumed they were of the same opinion.

Nellie had just reached this pleasant consummation of her reverie, and had regained the same bright glad look with which she had started on it, when wheels were heard at the garden-gate—a sure sign that the coach was come in, and the sisters at hand.

Nellie ran out in the dark, and Robert stayed to light a candle. A great confusion, a rush of cold air from the frost, a smell of damp straw from the luggage an odor of fustian from the guard's coat, a general confusion from every one's talking at once, and chinking money in unison, and then a cheery "Merry Christmas to you, sir." "Health ladies," from the man, as he drained the glass Nellie had filled for him, and he was gone, the door closed; and the three sisters stood together again for the first time for three long years; the first time since they bade adieu to their early home, and their mother's grave.

The memory comes throbbingly to Nellie's heart, it rises in her voice, and swims in her bright eyes; but she forces it back with words and smiles of welcome.

"Dear Carry, how handsome you have grown! I can see that, though you're blue with cold."

A quieter, tenderer greeting for Margaret, who is already seated in the easy chair, close to the fire, with that dear, clumsy Robert trying to get her out of her wraps—he does it, too. Nellie would never have believed him capable of such a thing; and Margaret's quiet eyes are raised to thank him—she is too tired to speak; but they seem friends already, that is pleasant! Now to see him greet Carry: he turns to her with frank kindness, a little awkward, perhaps, but brotherly too, and imprints a paternal kiss on her cheek, which she accepts with a certain hauteur, for Carry prefers distant homage.

Nellie has no time to think what she feels; but as her quiet eye remarks, she does feel something.

Margaret must have some tea, and go to bed, that is quite clear, she is so pale and tired.

What is all this care for Margaret? why do their voices sink to gentler, more caressing tones, when speaking to her, and their actions shadow her round with another atmosphere than that of ordinary life?

Margaret is an invalid, doomed never to know the blessed meaning of health and strength; there is no hope for her, only a long, lingering life of pain, perhaps; but this sad certainty, and the mystery of her patient suffering, make her a holy thing to those two kindly natures. Robert has taken off his spectacles, and forgotten to replace them in his anxiety about her; and had Nellie time, she suspects she should detect tears in those eyes, so occupied with her invalid sister.

But it is all bustle (quiet bustle though, for Nellie is never noisy) till Margaret has had her tea, and is safely stowed away in her warm room, too weary to admire its neat cleanness or to say more than a faint "God bless you, darling!" to her attentive sister.

And now they three draw in their chairs round the fire, and prepare, as Nellie says, for a nice chat. Who is to begin? Carry sits on one side, very upright; tired, but refusing to own it; handsome too—a showy beauty, a fine bust, quick flashing eyes, wanting softness it may be. She is beautifully dressed also, for she lives with the wealthy relatives whom Nellie had left for solitude and a maiden-aunt; and her silk dress fits nicely, and has an evident self-consciousness of being in the newest fashion. It was not a dress she need have apologized for at any rate, as a travelling one, especially to Robert, who never knows even what his wife wears, has no knowledge of silk or satin, but calls everything stuff, whatever its texture. But when Carry had made the apology, which had been on her mind ever since her arrival, and Robert had begged her not to name it, and Ellen had smiled at her innocence, the conversation, so feebly begun, came to another dead stop. Why didn't Robert begin? He sits looking through those dreadful spectacles of his at the fire, thinking abstractedly, when he ought to be talking instead; one of his funny stories now would set them all off, if he would but tell it.

Had Nellie written a description of Robert at that moment, and Carry another, how different they would have been! Nellie would have said, that it was the dearest, kindest face in the world; that the spectacles concealed the mildest, most beaming eyes, that ever a manly soul looked through; that the scanty hairs on his nearly bald head, covered the most clever, sensible brain. And Carry would have said in three words, what a queer, old-fashioned-looking husband poor Nellie has got!

But the evening that promised to be so cheerful was going by, and they were all speaking in monosyllables. Nellie made a dash: she began upon their childish days. Carry let it drop: she had a bad memory, and wasn't sentimental, she said. Nellie talked of the town she lived in; Carry grew communicative on the score of society, gossip, and the fashions. Robert showed great signs of weariness, and looked wistfully at his book. Nellie made a great effort, forced him into the conversation, and at last into one of his best stories. But alas! just at the very best part, where the interest was greatest, Carry gave most evident signs of being bored; Robert saw them not, but deliberately pursued his way; Carry yawned behind her hand. If he would but talk a little faster, and not laugh at his own jokes: no—he is fairly off. Poor Nellie was greatly troubled; were it possible to hurry him, or to interest Carry; but no, Carry will not be interested; she begs his pardon just as he reaches the very point of the whole matter, and asks what time it is, for she really thinks she must go to bed. Robert, not a whit disconcerted, answers her question; but Nellie blushes for both, is angry alike with the long story, and the rude inattention it received. However, it is all over now, and so is the evening she looked forward to; and she marshals Carry upstairs to her room.

The visitor's room, *par excellence*, with a broad, old-fashioned lattice casement, half-overgrown in summer-time by scented flowers, with a cheerful fire in a modern grate, picture-covered walls, and a white dimity-covered bed, the essence of cleanliness, and inviting comfort.

Carry throws herself into an easy-chair, and yawns again.

"How do you contrive to breathe, Nellie, in these rooms?"

"Very well, dear; why not?"

"They are so low, they quite suffocate me."

Nellie had never found it out.

"You are accustomed to such grand doings, you see, Carry."

"How you could leave a town for such a place as this, Nelly, is what puzzles me; and then to fix yourself in it by marrying? Why did you not wait till I was settled? and then you could have come to me, and I would have found you some one worth throwing yourself away for."

The words implied something distasteful about Robert, and Nellie colored violently.

"I am quite happy, Carry," she said; "I do not wish to change my lot."

"Quite happy? Nonsense!" said Carry; "do you mean to persuade me that any one can be happy without society, mewed up the whole day long in small rooms, with a husband in spectacles, who tells long stories, and laughs at his own jokes?"

"Oh, Carry, he is the best—"

"My dear, I don't say he isn't, for I'm sure he is all that; but you can't deny, and I'm sure it's no disgrace to him, that he does wear spectacles, is very prosy, and old-fashioned."

"Never mind, when he is kind and good," said Nellie.

"No more than he ought to be, with a young, pretty wife like you, Nellie dear; but still I do maintain, that you ought to have married better. Fancy the fun that would be made of him, if he were introduced at N. in our set! It would be impossible. But there, don't be angry, it's no use talking now, it's done; you must come without him—say you want change of air, and leave him at home. I shall expect you very soon, my dear; for I'm expecting to be married; and when I've a house of my own, I hope often to have my sisters with me."

Nellie forgot everything else in her joy at this news.

"Dear Carry, are you really engaged? Oh! tell me all about it."

"I really am; and who to, of all men in the world?"

Nellie shook her head.

"Why, Charles Sewell."

Back, back, wild throbbing heart! what have you to do with this? Back, back, hot blood! painting tales that should never be told on the blushing cheek. Should Robert Fairfield's wife start thus, at a name connected with falsehood and wrong?

Carry wonders at her emotion; but her triumphant pleasure blinds her eyes to its extent.

"We shall be married early in the summer; we have chosen our house, and when I return, shall begin furnishing."

Then followed a list of all the furniture, useful and ornamental, which would be absolutely necessary; the catalogue was unheeded by Nellie, though she seemed to listen attentively; but Carry was startled when she rose at length, and putting her arms round her sister's neck, said, with a short, quick sob:

"God bless you, dear Carry, and him too; I hope you will be very, very happy."

Not another word spake poor Nellie that night in any mortal ear; but when, some hours afterwards, her husband drew aside the curtain, and looked on the sleeping face of his young wife, he found it was flushed as with unquiet slumber, and the long lashes that rested on it, wet with recent tears.

They all said it was a pleasant Christmas Day; even Carry allowed that—and certainly everyone seemed very merry. There was old Mrs. Fairfield, with her quiet, dignified ways, making her very looks respected; even Carry was awed into trying to win a golden opinion from her. There was Margaret, so delighted with everything around her, praising their country fare and habits at every turn; never tired of hearing how all looked in summer, and what were the pleasures they tasted then. Robert, too, continued to keep clear of all long stories, devoted himself chiefly to Margaret, and renounced spectacles for the day. Why he ever wore them no one could understand. It was not for the sake of looking professional, for he was a man of small, but independent fortune; nor because he was near-sighted, or had weak eyes—no, but he had formed the habit, and though he could see much better without them, not even Nellie's coaxing could procure more than one day's intermission of the odious things.

"Your marriage is not quite such a mystery to me as it was last night, Nellie," said Carry, smiling archly, when they found themselves alone again.

"Oh!" said Nellie triumphantly, "you begin to do him justice then?"

"Do you justice,do you mean, you demure little hypocrite? however, you might have been frank with me. How much a-year has she?"

"Who?"

"Why, Mrs. Fairfield, of course."

"I have no idea," said Nelly. "Why?"

"Oh! I dare say you have no expectations," said Carry, satirically; "you are quite superior, you and Robert, to anything of the kind."

"My dear Carry," said Nellie, with wounded amazement, "Mrs. Fairfield lives on an annuity that dies with her."

"Then I am more in the dark than ever," said Carry. She stood looking musingly at the fire a few moments.

"But there, go to bed, Nellie, do," she added, giving her a cold kiss; "I think, after all, you're just a fit wife for that dear, slow old Robert of yours. Good night, Nellie; good night."

Nellie had a puzzled look on her face when she left the room; it wasn't as bright and cheerful now as on Christmas Eve.

"Dear, slow old Robert," murmured Nellie, as she laid her hand on the handle of the parlor-door; "after all, I may as well go to bed at once; I dare say he doesn't care for a gossip;" and softly withdrawing it, she went up stairs again.

Look to it, Robert; for a man with spectacles, you are blind indeed if you cannot see that there is a veil weaving between your heart and your little wife's. The bright smile has been worn for show to-day, and the cheerful voice made an effort to be cheerful—neither came straight from the heart; look to it dear, slow old Robert; or throw away your spectacles and live in blindness evermore.

Carry was gone to see the poor relative who had been Nellie's protectress; Robert was spending an hour with his mother, as his custom was every morning. Nellie brought her work, an embroidered collar that Carry had designed for her, and sat down beside the sofa on which Margaret lay reading. The book was laid aside at her sister's first attempt at conversation.

"Well, Peggie dear, you haven't told me how you like Robert?"

"There was no need for it, Nellie; who can help liking so kind and gentle a man?"

"You don't find him so very old-fashioned, then?"

"I like old-fashioned things, Nellie; did we not agree yesterday that there were no songs, no books, no flowers, like the old-fashioned ones?"

"And you do think Robert old-fashioned?"

"It is such a strange epithet to apply to him, I hardly know. What does it mean?"

"Why, that he is prosy and odd, not like the young men of the present day."

"He is hardly to be called one of them, dear Nelly; so that says nothing. As to his being prosy, I don't know; he tells long stories, certainly; but he so evidently enjoys them himself, and has such a kind intention of amusing his listeners, that they should be the last to find them so."

"One more question, Madge, and I have done. Would you have married Robert Fairfield had he asked you?"

"No, Nellie."

"Ah! there you see, why not?"

"Because, dear, there was one, and only one, to whom I ever would have said 'Yes,'" answered Margaret quietly, though her changing color revealed the emotion she tried to suppress.

Nellie kissed her caressingly.

"Forgive me teasing you with questions," she said; "but Carry has put these things into my head—she does not like Robert. You see Mr. ——, I mean the young man she is engaged to, is such a fine handsome fellow, she cannot help comparing her lot with mine; and then she pities me, buried, as she says, in the country, and leading such a humdrum life."

"Laugh at her for her pity, Nellie; you don't need it; and if it is any consolation to you, I assure you, were I compelled to choose between the two gentlemen, you would be the loser, not Carry."

"Ah! you would take my Robert, then; and yet Charles Sewell is very handsome and gentlemanly."

"Granted; but I prefer Robert's expressive face and genuine kindness."

Nellie kissed her again; she felt happy and contented once more; and laying aside her embroidery, drew out a pocket-handkerchief of Robert's that wanted hemming and worked his initials in her own hair. Margaret smiled quietly, and resumed her book.

* * * * * * * * *

It is in the middle of June, and a bright summer day—not your modern summers, but an old one, such as our ancestors basked in: there are June flowers in the garden, June scents pouring in at the window, and filling the cheerful rooms with their rich fragrance; and better than all, June smiles on the sunny face of Robert's little wife, as she stands beside him, in a plain cotton dress, reaching up the nails he is hammering into the wall.

There are genial, beneficent spirits abroad this morning to a certainty, and their influence is seen and felt everywhere; there isn't a swallow soaring round the cottage that isn't conscious of it; there isn't a saucy breeze dancing among the leaves, or dashing in at the window, to ruffle Nellie's stray curls, that isn't full of the joyous certainty as it can be; the brawling brook in the meadow beside the house is singing the same thing; and the flowers nod their heads and toss them up and down, with evident conviction of the fact.

But what has all this to do with a newly whitewashed room, a new cheerful paper, a husband nailing up muslin curtains, and a little wife handing him the nails? A great deal, as you will see.

The six months that have passed have not gone by without leaving some token of their presence and effects. If Robert were compelled to make a confession, though thumb-screws and the rack wouldn't induce him to do it, he would own that the Christmas visitors had not left his home such a happy one as they found it; and that every time a letter came in Carry's handwriting, there was a renewal of the old strangeness in Nellie's tone and manner—a shadow on her face that used not to be seen there once; that very often, when his spectacles were bent on his book, his eyes were looking over them, trying to find out what that something was—all to no purpose. And Nellie, oh! hers would be hard confessions, too, of envious feelings when she heard of Carry's gaiety, and Carry's lover, and Carry's presents; of yearnings to be fashionable whenever patterns of the newest shapes were sent her; of attempts at Italian sonatas, instead of the simple old songs that Robert loved. A shameful confession, indeed, Nellie, and one you may well blush to make, even to us.

But it had been even worse than this since May, when Carry was married; and in truth the account of the wedding, such a wedding as it was, might well turn Nellie's simple head, and make her heart discontented for a month afterwards. And if the truth must be told, the house was smaller, the garden emptier, and Robert's stories longer than they had ever been before. It was well that Carry could not marry again just yet.

About a week before the bright morning we have just described, a note had come from Margaret, announcing that the aged relative with whom she had hitherto resided was no more, and she had written to Carry asking from her the asylum she needed.

This was natural, for Carry's husband was a rich man, and in her large establishment, a nook could easily be found for her sick sister.

But Carry had replied that her husband declined being burdened with her, though he would be happy to allow her a small annual sum, which she could eke out with needlework.

This reply was repeated by Carry in her weekly letter to Nellie. Margaret was silent on the subject, and in her indignation she carried the letter to Robert.

"You must write to Margaret, dear," he said when he had read it, "and tell her, as long as we have a home there will be a place in it for her; she will be a blessing to our house, my wife—we shall all be better for it."

"Dear Robert, how I thank you! but how shall we afford it?"

"That is my province, Nellie; the extra trouble will be yours—shall you mind it?"

"What, for Margaret? Oh no, dear!"

The summons was sent; they wrote it together, and, wrote it so that there was no resisting it.

By six o'clock the next morning there was a great bustle and hammering in the house. Nellie opened her eyes, and sleepily wondered what it might mean. Presently she discovered Robert was gone. Ah! then he was at the bottom of it, no doubt. With righteous curiosity she jumped up, thrust her little white feet into slippers, flung on a dressing-gown, and stole down stairs. As she opened the study door, the beloved sanctum of her husband, the room which even she always entered with a sensation of awe, she was driven back by a cloud of dust. Returning to the charge, she presently distinguished through it that the walls were dismantled the heavy bookshelves moved, the old disused doorway to the garden opened, and the carpet taken up.

"Why Robert, Robert," interrupted Nellie, "what does this mean; what are you doing?"

Robert emerged from the interior, dusky with dust and dirt. Nellie laughed at the figure he presented.

"What are you doing, ogre?" she repeated.

"Arranging a room for our sister, Nellie, to be sure; you didn't think she was to be doomed to her bedroom or our company for ever, did you? No, no; she must have her own little quiet parlor, where no one shall enter without her leave. A little paint and papering, a new carpet, a sofa, &c."

"But your study, Robert—your papers and books?"

"Must find a fresh place, Nellie."

"Dear, kind husband."

She forgot his dusty coat, and laid her little head lovingly against it.

"Why, you see, darling, I can have the bay window in the parlor, place a table there for my papers, a shelf for my books, and be as snug as here."

"You are too kind, dear," said Nellie, with tearful eyes.

Robert thought she was going to say more, so he caught her up in his arms, and ran with her to her own room.

"Dress yourself quickly, and come to work, Nellie," he said, cheerfully; "there will be great need of your clever fingers."

So there was, indeed, and busy enough they were for many days. The Italian songs were quite forgotten; the new fashions laid aside in oblivion, and Carry me her husband, if ever they came into Nellie's thoughts, were dismissed with gentle pity.

The room was nearly ready now, looking so clean and bright, those fluttering muslin curtains once hung up, a last touch with the duster, a vase of fresh flowers on the table, and all would be ready for dear Margaret, who was making the journey in short stages, and would arrive by tea-time.

There was a stealthy knock at the door leading to the garden.

"Come in," said Nellie.

A shaggy head was thrust in.

"Oh, come in, Tom!"

"Well, Tom," said Robert, "what news?" And as he spoke, he gave a reluctant nail a blow, that consigned it to its fate.

Now Tom was not a ready speaker, though a careful, loving attendant of Robert's horse, and a most discreet gardener of Nellie's flower-beds.

"Please Sir, the Squire's no objection."

"What, he'll take you, Tom, will he?" said Robert, turning round on the top of the ladder, with a boldness that struck fear to Nellie's heart, and looking down on the mortals beneath him with the aspect of a very new and original cherub of a reckless character.

"Please Sir," said Tom, glancing up rather timidly; for he did not feel ensured against a precipitate descent from his master; "please Sir, the Squire'll try me."

"What! is Tom going?" said Nellie.

"Yes, my dear. You see I have sold the horse. It doesn't want another nail, Nellie, does it?"

"Sold the horse, Robert?"

"Yes, my dear. I may come down now, mayn't I?"

"Steady, Sir," said Tom, applying his hand to the ladder.

Robert went on talking as he came, evidently pretending that he was used to it, and not at all nervous.

"Walking is so much better for the health, my dear; and the Squire was quite anxious for my horse, he admired him so much. Take away the ladder, Tom, will you, please? And so for the garden, Nellie my love, I think gardening good for the health too, and that, between us, we can always keep it as pleasant and neat as it is now, eh?"

A very strange thing is taste. In Nellie's eyes at that moment—ay, and for ever afterwards—that quiet, old-fashioned man, in his spectacles and his working-dress, was the handsomest hero that ever existed. The old faith and love, only a thousand times stronger than before, came welling up from her heart and streaming from her eyes, as she threw her arms round him, and murmured how good and noble he was, and how unworthy she felt to be his wife. More she would have said, in her shame and penitence, but Robert stopped her with his kisses. He needed no confession. Her face was still hid against his shoulder when Tom came back, and she kept it there to hide her tears.

"Well, Tom, you need not forget the old place, you know, when you have a new one."

"By your leave, Sir," said the worthy fellow, with great emphasis on the first word, "I'll give a look in at Missus's flowers from time to time."

"Do, Tom, and what's more, if ever you go courting Annie Morris of a Sunday, and don't come here first for a flower to put in your button-hole, why I hope Harry Long will cut you out."

"Thank ye, Sir, I'm sure," said Tom, with a grim smile, "if I may make so bold. Not as I'm afraid o' the likes of him!"

Robert held out his hand to his faithful servant. Tom took it respectfully, and shook it roughly. Nellie too turned round, and extended hers; but Tom could not stand it any longer. He bolted out of the room and hiding himself behind the stable-door, blubbered like a child.

Robert told one of his longest stories after tea that night, when they sat beside Margaret in her pleasant little room; and he had scarcely begun it when Nellie quietly stole her hand into his, and so startled him, he almost forgot what he was talking about. But he soon grew accustomed to it; and indeed it became such a habit, that he never could tell a tale well without it at last.

* * * * *

Robert wears his spectacles to this day; but it is observed that every year he lives, he looks more and more over them at his wife's face, and less upon his books. It is not surprising to those who know what pleasant thoughts are written there, and what a quiet contented heart they rise from. Margaret is a bond between them both—a constant exercise for self-denial, patience and forbearance, keeping their souls ever pure from selfish rust and idle indifference; and Nellie, having lost her taste for Italian and the fashions, and having once made up her mind that her husband is the best and handsomest man on the earth, has never since been converted from the delusion, despite several well-aimed efforts on the part of her sister Carry. And she is quite right too; these illusions are half-sisters to Faith; and if in the ancient camp in the wilderness there were some who spoke mockingly of wooden images, covered with gold, it was better to kneel among the simple believers, who called them angels of the Mercy Seat; for to those only was the hidden glory revealed.

THE SUMMER VACATION.

The summer vacation begins with July, and soon we shall see the meadows and mountains crowded with migratory citizens, in search of a brief rural episode of quiet and pleasure. The schools, many of them, however, do not close till near August, and therefore it is not until the last of the summer trio is upon us that the season arrives at its height and fullness. Meanwhile, expectation is ripe, and the little ones, with longing eyes, are looking forward to that consummation of their dreams—a month among the hills and forests—a free, unrestrained month of holidays, wherein no schools fling their awful shadows, no studies obtrude their irksome tasks, no routine of duties check the full expansion and riot of their capacities for pleasure.

It is an excellent thing, this brief respite from brick walls, odorous gutters, hot pavements, and the proprieties. With what an elastic bound one's feet first touch the turf after months of tramping over the hard, glittering, unyielding stone! with what a gasp of pleasure the air that comes over meads and forests, is drawn into the lungs until it titilates through every vein in the body! with what independence do we tear stock and collar from our necks, hide from our sight stiff beavers, encase our feet in the easiest of shoes, and in the way of coat and, pantaloons, repudiate fashion, law, and the tailors! And then with fly-baited hook, to sit and dream upon river banks, and fancy ourselves true anglers; to saunter up the steep mountain side; to gallop along the river road; to sleep at noon-day beneath waving elms; to glide with spreading sail over the moonlit lake; to pluck fruit, fresh and dew-glistening, from drooping boughs—these are only a few of the pleasures the summer respite affords. We find a rare pleasure in the most insignificant things of rural life; in berry pickings; in whole day's rambles in the forests; in flower and moss gathering; in watching play of light and shade amid the foliage; in the fishing jaunt; in the mountain pic-nic; in the drive; in the walk; in cool drinks of creamy milk! This last is not to be despised. Who that has wandered in the country, parched with thirst, has not felt a deep delight at stumbling, unaware, by some sudden turning in a green lane, beside an open gate, upon some modest milk-maid, and obtaining of her a draught of new milk, which was drunk while the white foam hung about the lips like creamy may-buds. Those draughts of milk linger about our memory still.

It is delightful to wander up those green lanes that lead nowhere save to fields where the road is never crushed by a wheel all summer long, saving where the hay-harvest or the wheat harvest is gathered in and led away. These are old highways by which the choicest wild flowers dwell, over which armies of bees have marched. Pleasant is it to linger about such spots as these, listening to the bleating of sheep, and the fainter cry of the little lambs as they bound over the daisy-clad hillocks, while the deeper lowing of horned cattle, who give a charm to every landscape, adds an agreeable voice to the out-of-door concert of Summer, and plays bass to the band of birds that sing in our great, green cathedrals—the woods. Indeed he is not adapted for vacation in the country, who cannot enter into all these little pleasures, and mainly find his source of happiness in the thousand things that lie around his path. Convulsive seekers after violent and noisy pleasures, should betake themselves to the watering-places, to big hotels, hot bed-rooms, pompous and noisy dinners, midsummer balls, dusty drives, much fashion, and no comfort. The quiet, in-glowing happiness of rural life, is not for such as they. But those whose summer vacations are spent with nature, in simplicity and love, will have bathed in the bath of youth, and will go back to town duties and pursuits, regenerated and new-made. The air they have breathed will be as nectar to their lungs—a golden spur to their vigor, and the blood so animated and set a-glow, will stagnate no more that year. The brain will work the stronger and clearer, and the heart will be the purer for its little diversion into the sympathies, hopes, and charms of Nature.

A STORY OF TWO LIVES.

"I think we are not wholly brain,
Magnetic mockeries."—*In Memoriam.*

The scene was a London fireside about the middle of December. A family group was assembled round the tea-table, in the dining-room of a convenient substantial house, in a pleasant and well-esteemed quarter; evidences of comfort and wealth were abundant, and perhaps a stranger would have observed that the apartment bore more the appearance of a commodious general sitting-room than of a mere *salle à manger*. Had he known also that there was a very elegant suite of drawing-rooms above, and a numerous and efficient corps of servants below stairs, he must have conjectured that there was some especial reason for the family spending the evening in the room where they had dined.

A girl of sixteen, just bursting out of childhood—with the bloom of her early womanhood rather to be guessed at than acknowledged—was presiding at the tea-table; her next sister, the junior by a year or two, was busily engaged on some wool-work, perhaps manufacturing slippers for papa; little Willy was cutting the leaves of his prize-book; and Mrs. Ireton was leaning back in her arm-chair, eyeing the party with quiet maternal satisfaction, and every now and then dropping some pleasant words—like flowers thrown upon a stream—into the murmuring babble of their family talk. Opposite to her, in the fellow arm-chair, sat her beloved husband, with their youngest treasure—a golden-haired, blue-eyed darling of four years old—on his knee; but for the father was no longer the blessing of beholding the dear faces around him. Mr. Ireton was blind, and it was on account of his bereavement that the family so often occupied the room with which he thought himself the most familiar. As the child on his knee clasped its arms around his neck, played tricks with his cravat, and showered kisses on his cheeks with baby prattle, and restless infantile glee, there was something pathetic in the manner in which the father passed his hands across the face of the child he had never seen! The gesture was all the more touching, because it was only loving, not sad.

Willy put down his new book, and handed Mr. Ireton his tea, with a gentle care not to have been looked for in a school-boy; while she of the embroidery-needle hastened to lift down baby, as the youngest was still called, from her father's knee. It was the delight of Mr. Ireton's children to watch and wait upon him; and they felt jealous every time a servant approached him

At this moment there was a loud knock and a ring at the street-door.

"I wonder who it can be," said Mrs. Ireton, after a pause; "we are not expecting any one this evening, and it is a most unusual time for visitors."

Meanwhile the door was opened, and the quick hearing of the blind man instantly recognized well-known voices. He exclaimed: "only Frances and Edward. I think they are inquiring if we are alone. How good of them to come round!"

The next moment, Mrs. Ireton's married daughter, Mrs. Crawford, and her husband, entered the room. They were a noble-looking pair; he a handsome man of about thirty, with that best air of high-breeding which is alike removed from petty affectations or cold indifference of manner, and the principal charm of which will be found to consist in its perfect ease and naturalness; this manner, be it observed, rising readily enough whenever occasion requires, to generous enthusiasm, but never betraying self-consciousness about trifles—a manner almost always demanding the rare combination of circumstances which includes nobility of character, large and clear intellect, and a worldly position that keeps far away depressing cares and anxieties.

Mrs. Crawford, the wife of three months, and barely yet one-and-twenty, must be rather more elaborately described. Considerably taller than the medium height, her finely-moulded figure was erect and yet pliant; and some inner spring of thought or feeling gave such grace to her movements, that her slightest and most careless gestures impressed the beholder with an idea of beauty. Features far more lovely that those of the passionless Greek ideal, were Frances Crawford's, though of the character to invite comparison with it; and eyes of Oriental lustre, a pure yet warmly-tinted complexion, and abundant dark tresses of silky texture, completed the picture. But that her smile was marvellously sweet and tolerably frequent, one must have declared that haughtiness was the predominant expression of her beautiful countenance. And haughty, too, at times she was; intolerant of meanness and falsehood; impatient of control, save, when yielding and obeying, she was likewise able to respect and venerate. It was curious, that while her sisters commonly called Bessy and Lotty, and the family in general were rich in nicknames, no one ever had thought of appropriating one to her, or even of degrading the majestic Frances to simple Fanny.

It is a pleasant sight to witness cordial family greetings; and though the married daughter resided in the next street, and meetings were almost daily, she stooped over the blind man's chair, kissed him fondly, saluted her mother almost as warmly, and bent her cheek down to meet the pleased faces of her young brothers and sisters. Then she returned to her father's side, threw back her large shawl, which, as her shawls always did, fell in an artistic drape across her chair; and now she removed her bonnet, and lifting both hands for a moment to her hair, seemed with one touch to have shaped its plaits and braids to order. She formed at that instant a charming *tableau vivant*, but loving eyes were the only mirrors in which it was reflected.

"It is very kind of you, my dear, to come in to-night," said Mr. Ireton, pressing the hand which had laid itself in his.

"Dear papa," replied Frances in a low tone, "I have had quite an adventure, and we could not rest without telling you about it. But—it concerns," and here she hesitated a moment, "it concerns Uncle Pembroke. Perhaps I had better wait till Willy and baby are gone to bed?"

"As you like, my love," returned Mr. Ireton: "it struck eight some time ago. Ah! here comes nurse for the little one, and Willy will soon follow."

And while Willy is loitering out his last ten minutes, showing his Latin prize to his brother-in-law, and wishing many "good-nights," the reader shall be made acquainted with the broad outlines of family history which concerned Mr. Ireton and his brother Pembroke. They were the twin and youngest sons of a wealthy banker, who had maintained the highest repute during the first quarter of the present century. An elder brother had always been intended for the man of business to succeed in the banking-house; and the twins being amply provided for by the will of a maternal relative, had for some joyous years followed pretty nearly the bent of their inclinations. Their according tastes led them to travel, and chiefly in the south of Europe; and there had been fostered and cultivated the intense love and appreciation of Art which seemed with both of them to be a master-passion. For a little while bright indeed appeared their human destiny. Blessed with health, youth, and fortune, they seemed free to follow Art for its own pure sake, to woo it in its loftiest and noblest moods, without regard to the "jingling of the guineas," or instant present fame. As if to crown their felicity, these almost inseparable brothers had attached themselves to two sisters, to whom they were on the eve of being united, when the fearful money-panic of 1825 shook the mercantile classes to their centre.

The banking-house of which old Mr. Ireton was the head, and which was like a prop to a score of others, fell, involving countless families in its ruin; and even the private fortunes of the twin-brothers, which had been invested in the bank, shared the general fate. The elder brother, the man of business whose stern integrity had all gathered round one point of honor, bowed beneath the shock: his reason gave way, and in an hour of horror and madness, he destroyed himself. And when the absent pair, who had been recalled from Italy at the crisis of pecuniary ruin, arrived in London, they found their poor bereaved father in a yet deeper and darker agony than that for which they were prepared.

Now was applied the test to two characters which had hitherto seemed to obey the same laws and follow the same impulses. But a river that glides and sparkles in the sunshine, has often its two currents: and though it seems to flow so evenly among flowers and meadows, parts its waters when shoals and rocks are near. So alike in person were William and Pembroke Ireton, that dear friends mistook them for each other; so alike in tastes had they been, that books were common property between them; pictures, it is true, were sometimes called "mine," and "thine," but as the brothers never dwelt apart, this had little signified. Ordinary friends of the amateur artists knew not their respective drawings, though, to be sure, certain connoisseurs had lately announced that William had the truer and higher genius; and yet it was William who, after a few days of wrestling thought, abandoned the pursuit of Art for ever.

Not so Pembroke; for he had borne the loss of fortune less nobly than his brother, for he had fretted, and fumed, and reproached over it. William had buried his regrets as in a grave, and only relaxed the iron firmness of his lip when comforting and counselling his venerable and heart-broken father. Quickly, too, he had addressed his betrothed, releasing her from her vow, if so it pleased her, and yet beseeching her still to love and trust him, and wait but a little space till he could decide how independence was to be won, that he might claim her. And when, "upon this hint," her true heart replied, loosening as it did so some folds of prudery, and she crept one day uninvited to his side, and there, with smiles and tears, re-registered her vows, he felt and knew that he had chosen well, and that the fulfillment of near duties commonly brings about our choicest blessings.

William Ireton abandoned once and for ever all dreams of fame, and devoted himself to lead the Human Life—to toil diligently and cheerfully for those who depended upon him. He cheered the last days of his aged father; he married the woman he loved; he threw his talents, his energies, into business; reared up the fallen fabric of mercantile honor, paid off old debts, and established a new firm of such noble repute, that its name is a synonym for upright dealing.

Pembroke, on the contrary, devoted himself to Art—that jealous mistress who, now that he had determined to live by his pencil, he discovered could bear no rival near her throne; and so he broke off his engagement with the girl whose heart was wholly his; and when William remonstrated with him on the manner in which this was done, he quarrelled with his brother, as he who is in the wrong commonly does with his reprover. The breach widened. Pembroke once more went abroad, but failed to correspond with William, because it was said there was an inmate of his family before whom his name had better not be mentioned. But that inmate died—the broken-hearted girl, the wife's sister: her death was a lesson of faith, and full of beauty and pathos, and there was a sweet message of love and forgiveness to be written to the absent one, which was done very gently; and yet Pembroke Ireton took no heed. Years had rolled on. William was the affluent banker-merchant, secure, humanly speaking, from the ills of fortune, when his sight—which, from an attack of inflammation experienced under peculiar circumstances in early life, had long been failing—showed the most alarming symptoms. The terrible affliction of blindness fell on him; but he bowed to it, meekly calling it the only hard trial of his happy life; and now, indeed, he blessed the loving kindness which had given him so many dear ones to be eyes and hands for him.

"Meanwhile, Pembroke Ireton, still estranged from his brother's family, had returned to England, and was established as a painter of singular, but very high repute. His pictures brought him large sums of money, but little was really known of the artist as a man though many and curious were the stories of his eccentricity, which circulated among the lovers of anecdote and gossip.

"Bessy and Lotty can keep a secret, I suppose?" exclaimed Mrs. Crawford, as soon as Willy's last good-night was said, smiting and looking, as she spoke, interrogatively at the two girls.

"Sister, of course we can," replied the younger, answering for both, and seeming by her tone as if the dignity lately acquired by having officiated as bridemaid, was tarnished by a doubt being entertained of her discretion.

The frequent beautiful smile parted Mrs. Crawford's lips as she observed the manner; but addressing herself more particularly to her parents, she proceeded: "Uncle Pembroke has made our acquaintance without in the least suspecting the relationship. He wants my face for his model in a grand picture he is painting;" and then, as if a sudden consciousness came upon her, that she could not describe the circumstances she had to relate without some laudation of her own person, a flush rose to her cheek, and turning to her husband, she added: "Edward, will you tell the story as briefly as you can?"

"It is a very simple affair," said Mr. Crawford. "Yesterday, we were riding on horseback in the park, when, happening to turn my head, I saw that my groom had stopped for a moment, and was in conversation with a gentleman. I fancied that something was wrong with the horse, and that the stranger had called his attention to it; and as the man galloped on after us the next instant, and, moreover, we met a couple of friends who joined us, the whole thing slipped my memory till this morning, when I received a letter from Mr. Pembroke Ireton. Shall I read it aloud?"

As "Pray do" was repeated on every side, he read as follows:

SIR: Two years ago I composed the sketch of a picture illustrative of Tennyson's poem, *The Princess*, but I have delayed the completion of my design from my inability to find a living realization of the poet's ideal. Feeling convinced that my true model, if discovered at all, would be found among my countrywomen, I, last spring, visited those places of public resort where beauty and intellect would be likely to congregate, with my search solely in view. One night, at the opera, I beheld Mrs. Crawford, and from that hour she has been the only Ida in the world for me. She must have sat back in the box during the early part of the evening, for it was only towards the close that I beheld her; and though I made my way to the door as quickly as possible, intending to follow the carriage home, in the crowd and confusion of the occasion she was lost to me. Since then, I have made many inquiries, but, without a clue to her name or abode, how could they be other than fruitless? Latterly, I have stolen an hour from every day's short daylight, with the hope of finding her among the equestrians in our parks; and that I succeeded yesterday, and learned from your servant your name, proves how true was my instinct. Sir, I beseech you, condescend to permit and persuade Mrs. Crawford to sit for my picture. She is the realization of the Princess Ida; I cannot accept any other countenance for her; and if you deny me, I must work from that shifting, imperfect memory bequeathed to me by two transient glances. For the love of art, do not refuse me; and if to this entreaty I may add another, it is that you will accept from me the finest portrait of Mrs. Crawford which can be painted by

"PEMBROKE IRETON."

"Edward, you will not refuse?" exclaimed Mr. Ireton with visible emotion. "Dear Frances, of course you will sit for this picture? and I foretell that my lonely brother will at last be restored to our knowledge and affection."

"We have forestalled your wishes," said Mr. Crawford, "by appointing to-morrow to call on him. How well," he continued, "I remember that night at the opera! Frances did sit behind my mother, who rebuked us more than once for chattering."

"Frances is a little like her namesake, my lost sister," said Mrs. Ireton, after a musing pause; "though the likeness is chiefly apparent when she speaks and smiles—the tones of her voice are like too. I wonder if Pembroke will trace these resemblances, and waken to the memories of his youth!"

II.

Pembroke Ireton was accustomed to receive certain connoisseurs of art, and wealthy patrons, which, by the way, he usually did with an air of indifference, that amounted to churlishness; but the visitors whom he was now momentarily expecting, aroused in his mind feelings of delight that were quite new to him. To have a true, perfect, living model for his grand picture, was the realisation of one of his dearest hopes; for the Man was to all appearance so merged in the Painter, that it seemed as if nothing connected with his merely human life could arouse his sensibilities in a degree to be compared with the influence of circumstances concerning his art.

It was a large, roomy house which Pembroke Ireton inhabited, just on the outskirts of the now fashionable part of London. Long ago, in the days of the two first Georges, it had been the scene of many a stately festivity; its wide hall had accommodated the sedan-chair, and its staircases been acquainted with hoops and trains; the spinet and harpsichord had resounded in its chambers, where courtly-powdered beaux, sword-girded and star-blazoned, had moved in solemn minuets, with patched and painted ladies. But all these things belonged to the "long ago" of a past century; the old house had survived many vicissitudes, and now, for nearly twenty years, had been the abode of a bachelor artist. Not one really comfortable habitable apartment did it contain—for Pembroke Ireton, keeping himself apart from all socialities, scarcely knew or remembered the ways of the world; and his two servants, from their forced seclusion and simple routine of duties, had fallen into a sort of lethargic, indolent mode of life, that rendered them, in this busy age, hardly less eccentric than their master.

Every room was more or less crowded with pictures, casts, antiquities, draperies, or other adjuncts of the *atelier*, and into these sanctuaries brooms and brushes were very sparingly admitted. The light was actually obscured by the dirtiness of the windows; and I will not hazard a conjecture as to the number—had their census been taken—of the colony of spiders which brought up their families in peace and security in shady corners and unmolested nooks.

It was about noon—the high tide, indeed, of December daylight—and Pembroke Ireton was growing impatient, for he had arranged the windows, the chair of state, the easel, and made every preparation for his model, when suddenly a new thought possessed him, and he rang his bell sharply. His one woman-servant answered the summons. Hannah was a comely, portly, middle-aged dame when she first entered the artist's service, but time, and the strange life she had led, had changed her to the stooping, crone-like old woman. Hannah had never, in her brightest days, been overburdened with ideas, but she had two strong affections in her heart—one toward her eccentric master, and the other for her brother Timothy, whom, on the strength of his being ten years her junior, she still called a lad, and whom, soon after her own engagement, she recommended for her fellow-servant.

"Hannah, what am I to have for dinner to-day?" was the prosaic question the artist asked of his cook and housekeeper.

"A steak to-day, sir," she replied; "you had some chops yesterday; and to-morrow is the day for a roast-fowl."

"Ah, true, true; but I expect visitors—a sitter, to whom I should like to offer some refreshment."

"Cake and wine, sir—I can buy a beautiful cake at the pastry cook's?" suggested Hannah.

"Hang cake and wine! No, I mean something dainty, and yet substantial—fit to offer to the Queen herself."

"Lor', sir, you frighten me! I haven't cooked a great dinner these twenty years."

"And I don't mean, I don't want a great dinner: only something very elegant, and very choice, to be ready about dusk—say, four o'clock. I will give you some money, and you must go to the people who supply collations. I don't care what it costs. I cannot stay to talk to you. Didn't you hear a carriage? and there's a knock. Timothy is deaf, I think, not to open the door. And tell him to get the wine from the inner cellar—that tokay that Lord L—— sent me—and hock and champagne, and the port that was laid down in '38. Mind, four o'clock; and sweep out the parlor a little, if you can. Here, take the money;" and hurrying her out of the room as he put a bank note into her hand, he added once more: "Never mind what it costs."

Possibly the last words were heard by the Crawfords as they ascended the stairs.

Surely there is no costume in the world more becoming to a woman of radiant, queen-like beauty, than a rich winter out-of-door attire. And as Frances Crawford appeared now in a robe of dark velvet, with an Indian Cashmere—whose size, though twice folded, was more than commonly ample—drawn gracefully round her; and furs of the rare, costly, peerless Russian sable, she looked, if far too lovely to have stepped—as the phrase is—out of a picture, yet notably worthy a painter's half-adoring study.

Pembroke Ireton's admiration and delight showed themselves in the flush of his sallow cheek, and in the cordial, grateful greeting he awarded to his guests. The occasion seemed so much less connected with the relations of social life than with the circumstances of his art, that he lost, in a great measure, the shyness which had for years been gradually incrusting itself round his manners; while his early good-breeding of course prevented the iteration of personal compliments to Frances, which, after all, would have appeared as inadequate as offensive, coming in the wake of the one great compliment he had paid her.

The great picture was to represent that scene where the Princess Ida rebukes the seeming "northern ladies," saying:

> "We did not think in our own hall to hear
> This barren verbiage current among men,"

and where the disguised prince and his confederates, "conscious of themselves, "perused the matting." At this first sitting, it was only a study of the face and figure the painter purposed; yet long before they parted, the artist hoped in his own mind to paint many pictures of Ida, illustrating the great, wise poem of which she is the heroine, even to the point where

> "Her falser self slipped from her like a robe."

But while the painter seemed lost in the delight of his self-appointed task, his visitors were contemplating him with an interest he little suspected. Beneath the calm flow of an easy, chatty discourse, his unknown niece and her husband saw more than once into the depths of his nature. When Mrs. Crawford first spoke, there was a startled glance from Pembroke Ireton's eye; and after he had grown familiar with her voice, he more than once heaved a quiet sigh after she had been speaking. Again, when Mr. Crawford addressed his wife by her Christian name, there was an evidence—they having, as it were, the key to the cipher by which it was betrayed—that told of a memory not dead, but sleeping.

Very sociable grew the painter and his guests, even at their first visit; and when the deepening winter twilight caused him to rest from his labors, and they all descended into the parlor, where, under Hannah's superintendence, the "collation" had been spread, a stranger looking on, would have considered the trio rather a party of old friends than mere acquaintances of a day. Even certain incongruities of the repast made mirth, and wore off formality; for Hannah, however much "on hospitable thoughts intent," had no knowledge of rule and custom to guide her; and though the viands were sufficiently good and abundant to afford an excellent meal, they were so strangely chosen, that it was easier for the host to make a laughing apology for his servant's selection, than pass it by unobserved. But the new friends did not part without the day for another sitting being appointed; and Mr. Ireton entreated that they would arrange to spend the evening with him afterwards, as he had certain curiosities of art he desired much to show them. As the Crawfords finally consented to this proposed plan, after only a faint, formal demurring at "such intrusion," they exchanged a glance which showed how mutually they rejoiced at the turn affairs had taken.

But the second sitting was more eventful than the first had been. Now, Frances was placed in the exact *pose* required for the great picture; and to complete the effect, a light drapery was thrown over her velvet robe, and fastened after the antique style on her shoulder. For this purpose, Pembroke Ireton selected from his stores a rare cameo, to which belonged a history. It was one of the undoubted works of Benvenuto Cellini, and had been nearly from his day in the possession of a noble French family, whose late descendant, fleeing from the guillotine in the Reign of Terror had rescued it with some other valuables, to prove his means of existence in exile. Pembroke Ireton purchased the brooch at great cost from the collector, who had received it from the noble exile's own hand; and this matchless head of Minerva—for such it represented—had independently of the stamp of its own beauty, an authentic pedigree of its possessors. Perhaps to gratify the taste of some belle of the eighteenth century, it had been gorgeously set round with brilliants, but though these were included in the price which Pembroke Ireton cheerfully paid for the brooch, he had ruthlessly broken them away, leaving his treasure in its original chaste simplicity.

Very earnest and very honest were Mr. and Mrs. Crawford's expressions of admiration of this exquisite work, and they were discriminating expressions too, so that the painter felt that his guests understood what they praised; and his pale cheek flushed, and his eye sparkled with pleasure as this sympathy declared itself.

By this time the dusty cobweb-festooned parlor had been something more than "swept out." Pembroke Ireton had felt the incongruity of entertaining his beautiful guest in a lumber-room, and had taken care that needful renovations and preparations should be made; and, on this second occasion, it was with every appointment of elegance and comfort that the trio sat down to their repast. Now, a party of three, where two of the number are a really united married pair, while enjoying the ease and confidence of close companionship, are usually more animated and conversational even than a *tête-à-tête* pair. Thus, merely as a pleasant social meeting this second sitting was to be marked with white in the calendar; but after dinner, when the bright fire, and the soft lamplight, and the presence of his guests, threw a home-charm around Pembroke Ireton, to which he was little accustomed, his nature seemed to melt, and his voice modulated to a tone, as if to speak his long-pent up emotions were become a necessity to him.

"Not unless I tell you a heavy secret," he exclaimed, addressing Frances, "can you estimate my gladness at discovering you, or my gratitude for your compliance with my wishes.

"I feel it an honor," replied Mr. Crawford, "that Frances should should be immortalised by so great a painter. Dear sir, never mention gratitude again!"

"But I must," continued Pembroke Ireton with visible emotion—"I must: even one year hence might have been too late. The great painter—what a mockery! in a little while to be the desolate, afflicted old man! My friends!" he added with forced composure, "I am losing my sight—physicians own it to me: unless I give up painting, I shall be blind in two or three years."

"Then," exclaimed Frances in a thrilling tone of entreaty—"then, in pity to yourself, paint no more: cease from this hour. What is Art to sight?"

"Never!" replied the painter vehemently. "For Art, long years ago, I gave up more than life and sight, though in my young, hot enthusiasm, I knew not what I relinquished; and to the last, Art shall have me—it claims even the dregs of my being."

"Pembroke Ireton has done enough for fame," said Mr. Crawford.

"Fame! Art has been my mistress; if she brought her handmaiden, Fame, I could not help it. It is a noisy busybody, hindering as often as helping. But life is not long enough to do true service to Art. Surely I do not grudge a pair of eyes, that have been but treacherous servants since, five-and-twenty years ago, they were exposed for two nights and days to the glare of Alpine snows. You wonder at this, my sweet young friend: it is the brain that paints, not the eye and the hand."

But Frances was overcome by a deeper emotion than wonder. That same perilous journey of early life which had laid the foundation of her father's affliction, had similarly affected the twin brother; and thus that apparently inseparable pair, whom yet strange circumstances had divided, seemed still to be mysteriously united by a common misfortune. "I am not wondering," she replied, trying to speak calmly; "I am only sorrowing, and thinking of a strange coincidence. My own dear father is blind—thus afflicted in consequence of a similar accident to yours—being lost in the snows of Switzerland when travelling in his youth in search of grand scenery."

"How strange!" mused the painter.

"You must know him," continued Frances in trembling tones: "you are formed to be—friends, companions to each other. Ah, you must know my father; he, too, loved Art most dearly."

"And now?" asked Pembroke Ireton.

"He is happy, though blind," returned the daughter, with a sort of cruel kindness towards her hearer—"happy, because our love, that seemed before too vast for increase, still grew as his sight waned; and the wealth of the heart outweighs the wealth of the senses. It seems to me a beautiful dispensation of Providence, that this heavy affliction has fallen where every surrounding circumstance lightens and alleviates it. Had my father been lonely and childless, how much more terrible would have been his lot!"

There was a minute's silence. With the morbid sensitiveness of a recluse, and the keen perception of one who, if only for the purposes of his art, had been accustomed to anatomize the passions, Pembroke Ireton shrank from a display that might have brought about "a scene." Stifled sobs made thick his breathing, and assuaging tears were rising to his eyes, but he controlled these evidences of emotion, and suddenly, and with a sort of set phrases, changed the discourse. "Your father must indeed be a happy man," he exclaimed with forced calmness, "despite his bereavement; yet had I known, dear madam, that my selfish outpourings would have led to this sorrowful subject, indeed I would have refrained."

"Nay," replied Frances, not wholly sorrowful to me; and is not sympathy, warm sympathy, a consolation to you?"

"I am not sure—perhaps not. Do not think me ungrateful; but I will not speak of my own trouble again. A little more wine, Mrs. Crawford; pray, half a glass, and let me prepare an orange for you."

A resolute host can always give the tone to conversation, and whatever were Pembroke Ireton's faults, want of resolution was not one of them. Thus he once more drew round the discourse to anecdotes of travel and Art; a portfolio of curious engravings was brought forward, and shown to his appreciating guests; and the marvellous Cellini cameo was once more admired, and the effect of the *relievo* examined by lamplight. Frances was holding it, but after one or two attempts to return it into the artist's own hand, she laid it on the table. After a little while, the owner took it up, but he seemed awkward and confused, as if he knew not what to do with it. Presently he stammered out: "If Mrs. Crawford would do me the favor to accept this Minerva's head, as a slight memorial of these sittings, I should be more gratified than I can express."

"So valuable a gift!" exclaimed Frances. "Indeed, you do me too much honor, are too generous; how can I accept it?"

"I must appeal to you, Mr. Crawford," returned the painter, "to use your influence, and not to disappoint me. I know no one else worthy to wear such a gem."

"It is a magnificent gift," replied Mr. Crawford; and it would be churlish indeed to refuse the acceptance of it. Yet you lay us under deep obligation."

"*I* am obliged," said Ireton, passing the cameo to Frances. "I can fancy it is sentient enough to know that it has only now found its true mistress."

"If I wear it, though," said Frances, holding forth her hand, and grasping that of the artist very warmly, "it must be on a condition."

"Any that you please."

"Only, that you dine with us on Christmas-day, to meet dear papa," and Frances smiled as only the Ida could.

"You are most kind; I shall be proud and happy. But, ah me!" continued the artist, "I had nearly forgotten: you must have the stones that belong to the brooch, in case you prefer the setting; I do not: perhaps you will like them, though, for a ring or a clasp, and they are utterly useless to me;" and while he was thus speaking, the artist pulled out the drawer of a cabinet, in which, among ends of string and sealing-wax, old coins, steel-pens, worn pencils, bits of India-rubber, and heaps of other heterogeneous refuse, there rolled about some twenty or thirty large diamonds of the finest water.

Frances Crawford was used to costly ornaments and elegant attire, and had diamonds of great price in her jewel-box at home; therefore, it was not the acquisition of the gems now offered to her that touched her heart or affected her to tears. But she instinctively felt that, despite his early errors, this estranged uncle had a fine nature, for no nook or cranny of it enshrined a meanness. And it is surely one test of nobility, when a man approaches fifty, and having had the discretion to win for himself independence, has yet never sacrificed his soul to the vice of the old and the successful—avarice! Such thoughts as these rushed through Frances Crawford's heart, and seemed well-nigh to deprive her of speech; all she could utter was, in a trembling voice, this strange rejoinder, "You *will* dine with us on Christmas-day, to meet papa?"

"O yes, of course, with pleasure," replied the artist: but the changes which passed across the beautiful face he had studied that day for hours could not be unobserved by him, and though without a suspicion of the truth, his curiosity was aroused, and he said smiling: "May I ask who your father is? Perhaps an old acquaintance, or some patron of Art, whom I ought to know? I need hardly say, I asked no question of your groom save your name and address."

There was again a pause, the painter wondering what could have occurred to cause the agitation he perceived; yet, amid all, congratulating himself at having caught a new expression for his Ida. "Pardon me," he continued, "if I have given pain: if this is to be an acted charade, I can await the solution."

"We meant it so," said Frances; "but I find I cannot act out my part. Ah, you have promised, and you will not recant?"

"The name!" asked Ireton, still smiling, for the fancy possessed him that it was some rival painter whom he was to meet, and towards whom rumor had fabricated some story of jealousy or envy.

"William Ireton!" said Frances very softly, yet looking, though timidly, at her uncle as she spoke.

His eyes drooped beneath her gaze, and he sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands. The sobs that once before that evening had been stifled, refused again to be driven back, and the large tears dropped through his fingers. Even Edward Crawford's manly spirit was moved, but he felt himself powerless to act in the drama which was going forward. Frances, too, was weeping freely now, but not tears of sorrow. She approached her uncle, and, moving his hands from his face, as she stooped over him, printed a gentle, loving kiss upon one of them. Her action broke the spell of coldness and restraint. Pembroke Ireton wound his arms around his young relative, drew her tight to his heart, and kissed her cheek with parental fondness. All he said was: "And you must be *my* child henceforth—always."

It was enough. Frances laughed amid her own April tears, and wiped away those of her uncle herself, parting the thin locks which had fallen over his forehead, as she might have done the rich tresses of a pet child. Oh, how these gestures of tenderness went to the heart of the lonely man, who had once thought the intellect able to satisfy the mighty yearnings of humanity! Still holding Frances by his side, Pembroke Ireton stretched out his hand to her husband, saying, with a sort of cheerful happiness: "A trick; but I forgive you, for it has made me a new man. Only remember, she is mine as well as yours; you must let her be my daughter.

"But, Uncle Pembroke," replied Frances, and the words ran together as if they been often coupled—"Uncle Pembroke, you will have to love Bessy and Lotty, and my tall brother Herbert, and Willy and little Charles."

"Ah, but they can never be Idas!"

"Shall you wait till Christmas-day?" asked Frances in a whisper.

"No: the sooner we all meet the better."

"Why not to-night?" asked Edward Crawford.

"Why not, indeed? I am feverish—restless, until it is over."

Again the family group are seated round the blind merchant's fireside, only now the tall brother who is succeeding him in his business is of the party. Again the knock at the evening hour, so unusual a time for chance visitors; again the quick ears of the blind man recognize well-kown voices, and he exclaims: "Frances and Edward—but they are not alone. If—if—it should be" ——

And then the door opens, and in a few brief moments the brothers, separated for five-and-twenty years, are face to face.

At this instant, there was something curiously "regal" in the deportment of Frances Crawford. The artist's quick appreciation of her qualities had been true and deep; whenever it seemed to her worth while to lead or to govern, she did so with an authority that became her so much, and which she assumed so naturally, that no one thought of disputing it. Accordingly, she passed her arm through that of the tall brother, and motioning to the younger children to follow, led them out of the room before they had time to question her will.

"Now, stay up stairs till you are wanted," she exclaimed with her beautiful smile; "and don't detain me with questions, for they cannot do without me a moment longer. Ah, Edward," she continued, seeing her husband and her mother close by, "that is right: take dear mamma into the little drawing-room. I know," and this Frances whispered to her husband—"I know mamma is thinking of my namesake, and I give you the charge to melt her to forgiveness." Then retracing her steps, she gently opened the door of the dining-room.

"It is Frances," said her father. "Come in."

"My Ida!" exclaimed the artist almost simultaneously with the other. "Yes, come to us."

The blind father was leaning one elbow on the chimney-piece—a favorite and familiar attitude with him—while the other hand rested on his brother's shoulder; for Pembroke had sunk into a chair that stood near. The light of the shaded lamp fell softly on the two countenances, showing them in full relief; and Frances was almost startled at the different expression which shone through features singularly alike in their outline. That placid expression so often remarked in the blind, seemed ruffled, it is true; but rather as a clear stream is stirred by the summer breeze in the summer sunlight, and so shines the brighter, than by any harsher cause. He looked ten years the younger of the two.

There were lines of positive anguish on Pembroke Ireton's countenance, for if this meeting brought joy, it also awakened long-buried memories, that seemed to stalk abroad like disturbing ghosts. The happiness of the reconciliation itself, taught him to measure the loss he had experienced during the estrangement of half his lifetime. He rose as Mrs. Crawford entered the room, and presently she stood between him and her father.

"Uncle Pembroke" threw his arm lightly round her waist, and the blind father, feeling her close presence, did the same; thus again their hands met, and most fitly as it seemed. Frances laughed merrily, but releasing herself from this somewhat awkward embrace, kept firm hold of a hand of each.

"I see clearly," she exclaimed with mock gravity, "that there is no such thing as contentment in the world; and this, I suppose, because the prizes in life are more fairly divided than we would have them. Here is Uncle Pembroke, with a fame not second to that of any living painter; that is his prize. You, dear papa, have drawn from fortune's wheel a wife that dotes upon you, and a quantity of unruly children, that always have their own way, and only pay you back for their indulgences by a vast amount of love. Uncle Pembroke thinks your prize the more precious of the two, and, ridiculous as the idea is, we must humor it, I suppose."

"It is hardly kind to say that he is right," exclaimed the blind man with much feeling.

"But it is true," sighed the artist. "Princess! I hear but to obey."

"Of course. But if I consent to be 'your child,' and papa and Edward give me away to you, it is to be quite understood that the whole family shares in your artist-glory. Henceforth, we are all to walk inches taller, in fact, as if we wore high-heeled shoes—which our pride in you will constitute."

"I have felt pride in Pembroke's genius all my life," exclaimed Mr. Ireton, "and I am thus the richer of the two."

"But not the pride, open, joyous, and triumphantly we shall feel now. Half our acquaintances do not know of the relationship; and by the way, I must now revise my visiting-list," and Frances tossed back her head, as if she were rehearsing the part of a newly-made duchess.

Beneath her playful manner she had spoken truths, which brought a host of healing influences with them—truths, too, which bridged over all the rough places in the reconciliation.

It was said that Frances Crawford had never acquired a nick-name; but it is the case no longer, for her husband and her uncle at least commonly call her "Ida,' and in their merriest moods, address her as "Your Highness." This is not to be wondered at, seeing that Pembroke Ireton has already painted three pictures of the "Princess," contriving, by the way, to introduce the heads of Lotty and Bessy among his "violet-hooded doctors." This, however, is all that he has done for a long time, for the entreaties of affection have prevailed, and he spares his eyes as much as possible, and follows the instructions of his medical advisers, who give him more hope than he before entertained of preserving the blessing of sight. Once more the brothers are fondly united; and the past is not always a prohibited subject. Pembroke Ireton confesses his belief, that with the fulcrum of domestic happiness, he should have achieved even greater things in Art than he has done; that as the heart withers, the intellect contracts; and that no belief in a vocation is any real excuse for the omission of one near human duty: moreover, that the Human Life is the fountain of inspiration to poets and painters, and that to act poetry, is far nobler than to write or paint it. Long years of loneliness were the penalty of his former fatal mistake; but through his brother's family the artist at last experiences very many of the blessings of domestic life.

THE DISAPPOINTED HUSBAND.

In my college days in Merida, I was in the habit, along with my companions, of running a good deal about the suburbs of that city. One of our favorite haunts was the portico of the *parroquia* (parish church) of Santa Anna; partly because this was a very romantic spot, but more particularly, I should imagine, because the little image of San Francisco de Paula that stood within the church was much frequented by the *niñas* of Merida. I know not why such especial devotion was lavished on this saint, but certain it is that he was a great favorite with the young girls—both those entering upon maidenhood, and those about to take their leave of it. This, however, is a matter foreign to our subject. Let us return to that.

In this portico of Santa Anna, we were in the habit of meeting, frequently, a retired army officer—an invalid—who had many traits of originality about him. He and I at length became acquainted, and by degrees our acquaintance assumed a character of confidence in each other, and from time to time we entered into conversation. The name of the *militaire* was Vasquez—Don Toribio Vasquez.

One evening I encountered Don Toribio in the portico when none of my companions were with me, and the following dialogue passed between us:

"Señor Don Toribio, it appears to me that you are always contented. You have been very happy in your time?"

"Happy!" answered he with a grand sigh, "Ah! my young friend, you know little of my past life, or you would not say so."

"How? Did anything unfortunate occur to you?"

"Caspita! Anything unfortunate! Why, sir, I married a beauty that had never had the small-pox—ah! that I did!"

"Why, Don Toribio, I can see nothing that savors of bad fortune in that—nothing that should have rendered you unhappy."

"Hear me, friend, I have not finished yet. If you will have the patience to listen, I shall tell you the whole story; for I have taken a fancy to you, my little fellow, and it may serve you for a warning when you go to get married yourself."

"Very well, I will hear it with patience."

"Well then, sir, I was just twenty-two, when the devil put it into my head to go in search of a sweetheart, for the purpose—you know?"

"For the purpose of marrying her."

"Precisely so—for the purpose of marrying her. I had neither father, nor mother, nor grandmother, nor uncles, nor aunts, nor guardian—nor in short——"

"Any one to prevent you from carrying out your intention."

"Not a soul. I was absolutely free to marry when and whom I pleased—that is, with the consent of the lady herself."

"Of course."

"Certainly, of course that. Well, sir, to my story. In the neighborhood of my house there lived a family where there were five sisters—young girls, of course."

"Young girls, of course."

"All of them. The eldest was of some age, industrious, talented, very much mistress of the house, of agreeable manners, graceful, discreet, and of such judgment——"

"Of great judgment, eh?"

"Extraordinary judgment!"

"Oh! then the thing was settled at once? You made love to her—she reciprocated, and then—you married her?"

"Take your time, young sir. That lady had, in my eyes, one horrible defect."

"A horrible defect!"

"As a bad dream. She had a tall and handsome person, eyes brilliant and expressive, a small and curving mouth, a magnificent neck, fine proportions, a delicate foot, most beautiful complexion and——"

"Heo, Don Toribio! What defect had she then?"

"Why, sir, she had had the small-pox."

"She was pitted, eh?"

"No, I cannot exactly say she was *pitted*, but still there were some vestiges of it—and that was enough for me. On that account I refrained from paying her any particular attentions."

"Then you set your eyes on the second. Is it not so?"

"I shall tell you. The second possessed all the good qualities of her elder sister, both physical and moral. Moreover she was not at all marked with the small-pox. She had never had it."

"Ah! then it was a settled point at once—you married *her*?"

"No!"

"No! and why?"

"The girl had a slight falling of the eyelids that did not please me. It was not much, but still it had an effect upon her beauty that spoiled it for me."

"Don Toribio!!"

"Well? Here I am."

"Why, Don Toribio—but never mind. About the third?"

"Oh! the third sister. She was even superior to the other two in all the qualities I have assigned to them, but——"

"But what?"

"She wanted a finger from the left hand; and that, you see, destroyed the illusion. I could not help it, but was set upon perfection."

"And the fourth?"

"The fourth was a sweet girl of sixteen years. She was beautiful, talented, educated in everything. She played the piano, sang like a nightingale, and——"

"Vaya! The fourth caught you to a certainty?"

"Pardiez! it seemed destined there should be always something in the way to hinder me from getting a wife."

"How?"

"How? The villanous little chick wore false hair for the want of real!"

"What a misfortune! So young, so beautiful, yet bald. *Valga me Dios!* what a misfortune!"

"Stop, my friend! I have not said she was bald."

"What did you say then?"

"That which you have heard. I did not say she was bald, but her hair scarcely reached down to her waist, and I had a fancy for hair much longer."

"Carrambo! Don Toribio; you must have been a most difficult man to please. I can see it now. With such caprice nothing else would have satisfied you less perfect than the Venus de Medicis. I have no doubt that you remained a bachelor all your life."

"No, by my sins!"

"And who, the fifth sister?"

"Ah! she was the most beautiful of all—an angel! I was a year and six months in looking for a physical defect in her, and, to my delight, I could not detect the slightest."

"Well, what then?"

"Ah, what then, say you!"

"Yes; what was there against her?"

"Why, sir, she was foolish, ill-bred, conceited, vain, arrogant, ill-natured, irrascible, a mad-cap, a flirt, a coquette, false, ignorant——"

"Enough, enough, por Dios! You have said enough to prove she must have been the very devil. Of course then you allowed her to go her own way. It is not likely you would have passed her four sisters—each of whom had nothing against her, but the slightest personal defect—in order to embroil yourself with this *demonio*. Of course, none of the five satisfied you, and you went to pay your addresses elsewhere. Where did you go next to make love?"

"*Ay de mi! amigo;* I did not go anywhere. I wish with all my heart I had done so."

"What! you remained single then?"

"By my ill fortune, no! I married Donna Geronima."

"The fifth sister?"

"Yes, the fifth sister—that was her name."

"*Vamos*, Don Toribio! I do not wonder you have been unhappy."

"Friend. Do me the favor to have a little patience, and you shall hear the full extent of my misfortunes. I married her because my evil star so designed it, for I was in love to the finger-ends with that beautiful creature. 'Come, Toribio!' I said to comfort myself, 'this girl is only a child yet (fourteen years she was), you'll be able to mould her to your own will, and the happiest results will be sure to follow.' Well, I took her to the church, and the priest (good man he's not dead yet), married us. On the following day I desired to lay down the law in my own house, so that we might begin as I intended we should go on. The result was, that in less than three hours, my lady had fled to her mother's house, causing the greatest scandal, and carrying with her such reports as were never before uttered against a man of integrity. She declared that I was avaricious, stupid, tyrannical, and a thousand other precious things. My sisters-in-law, my most wise sisters-in-law, persuaded her to come back to me, telling her how shamefully she had acted. The result was she came back to the conjugal yoke, after, on my part, many offers of forgiveness for the past, and concessions for the future. She made an honorable capitulation; but for me, I may say, that I surrendered almost at discretion.

"From that time forward all was disorder. Fashions, gallants, waste, and all the plagues of Egypt rained upon me. The domestic government centred in her hands. She increased the number of our servants, and made me cut the most ridiculous figure in society. At the end of two years my considerable estate was nearly dissipated; and I began to feel the approach of poverty and misery. To all this I resigned myself; for, my friend, notwithstanding all, *that creature was very beautiful*, and I could not help loving her. It has always been my fate to love the beauty of the person more than the amiable qualities of the mind."

"But, Don Toribio, you surely see now how evanescent is beauty? You ought to consider."

"Consider! What call you to consider, my friend, when I?—but listen, and I shall detail to you the most terrible catastrophe that ever befell an honorable man. You have heard people talk, I suppose, of the year 1818? You have heard of the terrible epidemic, the small-pox, that then came into the country?"

"I have heard of it?"

"Well, my wife was one of the first who caught the disease. She was brought within the shortest distance of death's door; but in the end, money—which is omnipotent, my friend—money cured her. She rose from her bed again; but oh! amigo, such a sight! It was enough to frighten the dogs and cats. I might describe her appearance in detail; but it will be enough to say that she, who before was so beautiful, was now the quintessence of the most finished ugliness.

"When she looked into her mirror, and saw the ravage the disease had made, her fury broke out beyond all limits, and she raged in a most fearful manner.

"'Eh, señorita!' I said to her, as soon as she was fairly recovered; 'the only chain that bound us together is now broken. I have suffered at your hands long enough. Long enough have I put up with your irregularities, your ill-humors, your caprices, your extravagances, your flirtations, and the scandal you have caused me. I have endured all these, because you were then a beautiful woman, and in my impassioned soul, I loved you; but I am resolved to endure your nonsense no longer. You have lost all your beauty, and you are now a hideous thing for me to look upon.'

"As I said this she sprang to the table; and, seizing a knife, ran at me like a fury, determined to stab me."

"Well?"

"Well. I caught hold of her arm: and soon wrested away the weapon. After that I very coolly took a whip, and gave her a sound chastising which I repeated every day afterwards, until——"

"Until you killed her, I suppose?"

"Not a bit of it. The lady is not dead yet, but, thank fortune, she is safe out of my way! She is shut up in the mad-house, the maddest lunatic to be found in that establishment."

"*Valga me Dios!*"

"After all these misfortunes I joined the army; and here you see me, young sir, a crippled and retired officer, without having preserved a single claco of the comfortable inheritance which my father left me."

"And your sisters-in-law, Don Toribio?"

"Oh! they are all well married. They are now respectable mothers, and received into the best society. The most beautiful of all the family caused my ruin—partly because she had received a bad education from her mother, and partly because she had not had the small-pox before I married her. Therefore, my young friend, I would caution you never to marry a woman who has not already had the small-pox." And thus ended our conversation, which may serve as a warning to those who are contemplating an entrance on the state of matrimony.

THE MAIDEN'S CONFESSION.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

He whisper'd that he loved me;
 And, like the trembling air,
When dews are softly falling,
 And the blossoms stoop in prayer;
Those whisper'd words of passion
 Broke up the tranquil rest,
Where my heart lay, like a lily,
 With the green leaves on its breast.

Like that water-lily floating
 On the bosom of the deep,
With its fragrant heart unfolding,
 From its white and starry sleep—
My soul awoke to being,
 With a soft and troubled throe,
As the lotus waves and trembles,
 When the sunbeams kiss its snow.

As night bends o'er the roses,
 When his brow is wet with rain—
And his breath is rich with fragrance
 From the mountain pass and plain;
He came, and stood beside me,
 With a look of tender pride,
And he whisper'd that he loved me
 More than all the world beside!

Then my hands began to tremble
 To the pulse that stirr'd in his;
And my heart beat fast and loudly,
 In the tumult of its bliss!
I felt my eyelids drooping,
 Till the lashes swept my cheek,
And my soul grew rich with feelings
 That my lips can never speak.

He whisper'd that he loved me—
 But I said not yes nor no:
For my limbs began to tremble,
 And my cheeks were in a glow.
Then I felt him bending o'er me,
 And my lips were softly press'd—
As red rose leaves fall together,
 When they fold themselves to rest.

Then he left me, very softly,
 As a shadow disappears—
To the tumult of my blushes,
 To the heaven of my tears.
He paus'd, and look'd behind him—
 Had he heard my broken sighs?
Did he mark me shrink and tremble
 In the glory of his eyes?

No! he glided from my vision;
 And I heard his footsteps fall,
Like the treading down of music,
 Through the vestibule and hall.
Then my heart rose, full and richly,
 Like a goblet brimming o'er
With the fabulous old nectar,
 That sweet Venus drank of yore.

Thus I stole into my chamber;
 It was rich with starry gloom,
And the breath of many roses
 Went floating through the room!
The breath of mossy roses
 He had sent to me, at morn;
As stars come trooping skyward,
 Just before the moon is born.

Then I laid me down to slumber,
 In the stillness of the night,
With the curtains brooding over,
 So mysterious and white;
And there, in blissful weariness,
 My trembling lips would part,
While my hands were softly folded
 O'er the beatings of my heart.

As a bird, which wealth of music
 Has troubled in its nest,
Feels the melodious impulse
 Steal quivering from his breast,—
I whisper'd that he loved me,
 Till the starry midnight thrilled
To the solemn sense of happiness
 With which my soul was fill'd!

I lay and watched the starlight,
As it kissed the window pane,
Till its glory was o'ershadowed
By a storm of silver rain,
Shot through with shining lances,
From the chariot of the moon,
As it plough'd across the mountains,
Through the purple depths of June.

Then I felt the moonlight stealing—
Stealing softly toward my bed,
And its silvery wings unfolded
To the whisper'd words I said.
It brooded o'er my pillow,
And it wander'd to and fro—
As we see it in the winter
On a bank of drifted snow.

Thus it came, with gentle progress,
As we dream that seraphs move,
When the atmosphere of heaven
Thrills with immortal love,
Thus it floated all around me
And it trembled on the floor,
While I whispered "that he loved me,
And would love me evermore!"

Yes, I told it to the roses—
The moss roses he had given—
And I kiss'd away the blushes,
As the angels do in heaven.
Then I told it to the night winds,
As they shook the silvery gloom
And scattered clouds of fragrance
Through the stillness of my room.

Thus I whispered to the moonbeams—
The starlight, and the rose—
What I never breathe to mortals
When this full heart overflows.
For when feelings thrill our being
With thoughts above the earth,
Like prayers, we breathe them only
To things of heavenly birth.

When the morning sought my casement,
And flung its roses through
The snowy cloud of curtains,
Dash'd in with waves of blue—
I folded up my happiness,
And not a word I spoke.
Had I silenced it at night time
My wealthy heart had broke!

THINGS WE TALK ABOUT.

It is the season of the Rose. June comes decked with roses; they bind her brow, interweave her tresses, cluster about her feet, and her girdle shows resplendent with them. She sheds them alike on town and country. Other flowers may bloom only in the parterre of the fields, but the rose festoons our city doorways, and sheds its sweetness upon town air. In June, our streets are almost a garden. The country seems transferred to town. Standing in many places, the vista, up or down, is lined with roses. They hang like gay banners upon the walls. They clamber upon every balcony. Little court-yards are crowded with them. The whole city seems given up to a rose festival. Standing of a morning to watch Up-town flow Down-town, you will see nearly every button-hole decked with a rose. It would appear almost to be a rose procession. Indeed, we Gothamites love this flower almost as well as the old Romans did—who, you will recollect, cultivated no flower but the rose.

We have a passion for the rose. Who, indeed, has not? What other thing is there in the world upon which all tastes conjoin to praise and admire? The rose has its history—its thousand associations—which date as far back as mortal records extend. It has been no dumb, inanimate thing in the past. Not only has every poet sung of it, contributing each his mite to the world's admiration of its beauty, but it has been allied with great deeds. Christianity, Paganism, Mahometanism—each has always used it as a type of some sentiment, or recognized it as an expression of purity and beauty. Church altars are decked with it; it wreathes the tomb and the festal cup; it decks the brow of the bride, and the bosom of the dead; it is present at every feast, and decorates every altar. Only once in its history—in the red and white roses of England—has it led forth to battle, or symbolized contention and war. A hundred fanciful legends have been invented as to its origin; how it fell from the bosom of Aurora; how Zephyrus, enamored of Flora, changed himself into a flower, which Flora entranced with passionately kissed, and this union produced the rose; how it sprang from the blood of Adonis washed by the tears of Venus; how it was born contemporaneously with Venus from the sea foam, but perfectly white, until one day Bacchus let a drop of his divine liquor fall upon it; and many others similar to these, including that one of St. Francis who rolled himself upon thorns to mortify his flesh, and on every spot where the saint's blood had fallen, sprang up red and white roses. This last tradition introduced the rose largely into the Catholic worship. Young girls strewed roses before the cross; roses hung from St. Cecilia's harp; angels came down from heaven to offer roses to St. Dorothea; the Pope established the order of the Golden Rose. These are but a few items of a vast Rosiana that might be collected. We cannot refrain from adding an old tradition of Summer and the Flowers, we, for the first time, recently met with.

It seems, that before Summer came upon the earth there were no flowers save the few that Spring planted on the green borders of Winter, which were all white or of a faded yellow. These soon faded, and then followed a long series of months of unbroken and monotonous green. Summer had not set its foot out of Eden, where she had been sent to tend the roses—for, saving these, not a rose bloomed upon the whole face of the earth. Years rolled away after Eve's departure from the garden; the gates once guarded by the angels, now abandoned, crumbled into decay, and Summer at last wearied with her solitude began to pick her way over the ruins of the fallen pillars and decaying gates, which were half buried in wild bushes and briers, and stepped into the open sunshine of the unwalled earth. A dark and monotonous green hung everywhere. The flowerless foliage seemed to Summer like a pall. She walked musingly along, and presently began to touch the earth to see if her creative power was still retained. She smiled to see the old flowers spring up that were so familiar to her in Eden. Wherever she passed she made the green wilderness a garden. She touched the brier, and it shot out into roses; the woodbine, and it burst into sun-streaked honeysuckles. She went on her way and every flower she knew in Eden sprang up in her path. After a time she was raised into the sky and took her place among the Seasons, and ever since descends in her turn to touch the earth with her magic fingers, until it blooms like Eden of old.

—The reader will agree with us, we think, in pronouncing the following lines touchingly and tenderly beautiful. They are addressed to "*Miriam.* Obit 185–."

God rest thee!
We shall go about to-day
In our festal garlands gay:
Whatsoever robes we wear
Not a trace of black be there,
Well, what matter? none is seen
On the daisied covering green,
On thy maiden pillow, hid
Underneath the coffin lid.
God rest thee!

God take thee!
Ay, no other—Sleeps beneath
One who died a virgin's death;
Died so slowly, day by day,
That it scarcely was decay,
Till this English church yard kind
Opened—and we leave behind
Nothing but a little dust.
God is tender—God is just:
God take thee!

God take thee!
Nevermore above the ground
Be there relic of thee found:
Lay the turf so smooth, we crave,
None would guess it was a grave,
Save for grass that greener grows,
Or for wind that gentler blows
All the earth o'er—from this spot
Where thou wert—and thou art not.—
God keep thee!

—It is all settled at last. The how and the wherefore. Monsieur Eugène Huzar is the man. Miller and various other enthusiastic gentlemen were wrong, but Monsieur Eugène Huzar is right. The world, this time, will surely come to an end—weather permitting or not. There will be no mistake. M. Huzar has so published it (in France)—has so proved it, mathematically! scientifically! And how does the reader suppose? Through what dire influence? Let him not tremble while we name the fearful instrument! By science! By the exaggeration of science and power! We are to go on mastering the energies of Nature, subduing and binding them, until suddenly they will become too much for us—will burst their bonds—explode—and so end everything. This, after all, however, is only a solution to a question always current. If we go on improving, inventing, obtaining new domination over the elements of nature, where will it all end, has been the cry? M. Huzar says how it will all end; we shall draw down upon us an overwhelming catastrophe, involving total and universal ruin! That is to say, collisions on railways, bursting steamboat boilers, &c., are only miniatures in little of what the same elements are eventually to enact on a grander scale—in which the "great globe itself" shall blow up, or collapse. Bless us! Drown the Professors, then, forthwith. Burn the colleges. Root out the iniquity. If science is to serve us a trick like that let us be beforehand with science and turn it out of doors.

—In all pictures of the world limned upon the canvas of imagination, our own purposes, fortunes and existence loom up disproportionately and largely in the foreground. This is, probably, very natural, but that our sympathies, interest and knowledge should be so exclusively of a perspective order, does not, at least, evince expansive liberality or large wisdom. Why, for instance, our pity and sensibilities should be graduated on a scale of distance—why tears should only be shed in a geographical ratio, why concern and solicitude should be measured by latitude and longitude, is not very clear. When we read in the morning paper last month an account of our opposite neighbor's broken leg, and in the same column of a hundred wrecked and drowned unfortunates three thousand miles away, why did Mr. Green's broken limb so preponderate in our sympathies? How insignificant, in fact, was Mr. Green's leg compared to all the horror and terrors of that shipwreck scene! Because the shriek, the prayer, the agonising cries of drowning and struggling beings cannot be borne three thousand miles, should the heart refuse to heed what the ear cannot hear? Are human beings drowning on the coast of Africa less than human beings drowning on the coast of New Jersey? A few weeks ago there came news of a terrible earthquake at Jeddo which had overwhelmed thirty thousand people in destruction. The papers that contained this news were filled also with the particulars of a calamity nearer home in which nearly twenty lives were lost. The lesser misfortune was in every man's mouth. The greater was scarcely noted at all. A few gave it a passing comment, scratched their heads, and tried to think of Jeddo and thirty thousand killed—but the affair was too remote to be grasped forcibly. The impression at the best was but a vague and glimmering one. Others appeared to give it no heed at all. In none did it awaken keen sensations of sympathy, of horror, of grief. It was altogether mythical and obscure. In brief, it was ten thousand miles or more away, and earthquakes are matters that we read of but do not experience. Sympathy is something that should be more cosmopolitan than this. It should know neither time nor space. It should be human, and extend to the remotest reaches of humanity.

—A ramble on Weehawken heights is a pleasant thing. First take the precaution of putting a sandwich or hard boiled egg in your pocket. Then bend your step to the Hoboken ferry. The sail is swift and pleasant. The whiff of sea-air you catch from beyond the Narrows opens your lungs like a bellows, and titillates your nostrils with its pleasant saltiness. If an ache, or a stitch, or a pain, lies bedded in your side or chest, the big, full, expanding gasp of air you take into your lung-valves will dissipate it like magic. Once in Hoboken, strike a little to the north, then a little to the west, then follow the path you will see across the fields, then cross the plank-walk over the marsh, then with a huzza dash at the mountain's side. Rocks huge and in wild confusion; trees uncouth, fantastic, tortured, of a thousand picturesque shapes! A spirited, blood-exciting scramble brings you to the top. Then pause and breathe while you survey the prospect. The marsh, the Elysian Fields, Hoboken beneath you; the Hudson beyond, and the whole stretch of the city on the opposite bank within your ken; the Narrows and Staten Island in the far distance, below; over roof and steeple in the farthest background, before, the Long Island hills; above, the river stretching almost up to Tappan Zee. A splendid prospect, worth thrice the labor to reach! But do not stop here. Wander along the heights. They are picturesque, wild, beautiful, and the prospect continually assumes new aspects. When wearied, select a rock shadowed by trees and opening to the view. Out with your sandwich and fall to. Sit, and look, and muse. Off with your hat, and let the barber Wind toss and curl your locks after his own wild, fine fashion. The rumble of the town will come mellowed to your ear, but forget its confusion, heat, and dust. When the shadows at your feet grow denser and bigger, when the Elysian groves stretch out long, thin, shafts of shade far across the river, then turn your step city-ward; back again into its clatter, with a cool brain, an elastic step, a swift movement to the blood, such as you did not know before.

—MRS. BEHN was a celebrity in the reign of Charles II. Not one in a thousand of the present generation ever heard of her, nevertheless she was in her day quite as distinguished as Mrs. Stowe in ours—and for a similar reason. To her and not to Mrs. Stowe belongs the credit of writing the first anti-slavery novel. Mrs. Behn had lived in the West Indies—went to London, published a novel in which the horrors of West India slavery were depicted, or rather exaggerated, and she became the town toast, and the town rage. Strange that two hundred years ago the fashionable work of fiction was a species of Uncle Tom novel! The lady went to Germany—a German was smitten with her—and the object of this paragraph is to introduce a love letter which the fair authoress received—a marvellous and model love letter the reader must confess:

"MOST TRANSCENDENT CHARMER,

"I have strove often to tell you the tempest of my heart, and with my own mouth scale the walls of your affections; but terrified with the strength of your fortifications, I concluded to make more regular approaches, and first attack you at a farther distance, and try first what a bombardment of letters would do; whether the carcasses of love, thrown into the sconces of your eyes, would break into the midst of your breast, beat down the court of guard of your aversion, and blow up the magazine of your cruelty, that you might be brought to a capitulation and yield upon reasonable terms. Believe me, I love thee more than money; for indeed thou art more beautiful than the ore of Guinea. * * * Oh! thou art beautiful in every part, as a goodly ship under sail from the Indies; thy hair is like her flowing pennons as she enters the harbor, and thy forehead bold and fair as her prow; thy eyes are bright and terrible as her guns; thy nose like a rudder that steers my desires; thy mouth like a well-wrought mortar whence the granadoes of thy tongue are shot into the gun-room of my heart and shatter it to pieces; thy teeth are the grappling-irons that fasten me to my ruin, and of which I would wish to get clear in vain; thy neck is curious and small like the very top-mast head, beneath which thy lovely bosom swells itself like the mainsail before the wind." * * * *

And so on for as much more. Of course the reader wants to know if the lady yielded to a broadside like this. She did not.

—A sententious line in a contemporary runs thus: "About one new book in a hundred obtains success." Is this true? We think it is. And moreover scarcely more than one book out of every hundred that are written obtains a publisher. In no branch of human effort is there so much delusion—so many laborers with so little knowledge—so little capacity and large pretension. The success a few years ago of several female writers, has set to writing almost every woman in the country who imagines herself to possess a thought unspoken; and in our own experience we are continually importuned to examine and pass judgment upon the half-fledged productions of aspiring young misses, which almost invariably evince a good deal of untrained ability, and a certain cleverness in burnishing up and re-producing old material. These ladies are not unfrequently the residents of villages, their knowledge and experience of life limited to the circle of the Sunday-school and Church, and their reading confined to an indiscriminate selection of the weakest romances. Emotional and impressible above their companions, they find themselves the possessors of certain sensibilities which do not readily awaken appreciation, and so led on by the old silly dream of sympathy, and responsive minds, they begin to call that *Genius* which is but weak sentiment, lack of discipline, and diseased fancy. In this state of mind they rush into print—pant for fame (another name for self-worship) and dream of vast success, obtained without effort or study. They know nothing about the requirements of an author. They suppose her career "the primrose path of dalliance." Books are inspirations, they think, and not efforts. They know very well that a man cannot make a watch without study and apprenticeship, but they scout at the idea of study or labor being required in the more difficult and higher art of book-making. Let us undeceive these ladies (and aspirants of the other sex too). To write well requires long and patient study, a husbanding of powers, wide experience, large observation, *and apprenticeship!* Occasionally an author's first book astonishes the world—but, either the writer has previously, unknown, passed through a preparatory discipline, or his production is the single up-flashing of a fitful genius, that blazes for a moment, then goes out for ever. How many great first books there have been which have been followed by blanks—how many that have shot up brilliant and towering, and never another spark to issue from the same source! We earnestly believe that true greatness *is invariably a growth*, maturing slowly, nurtured by study and effort, and coming to a fruitful harvest only under cultivation, care, and patience of the laborer. One of the best evidences of wisdom is the knowledge *how to wait!* We say therefore to all young authors, *Wait!* Study, observe, mature—then publish—and you shall reap as you sow.

—IF you wish a pleasant metropolitan picture—or panorama rather, arrange to be walking up Broadway of a fine morning between the hours of eight and nine. You will encounter New York of the masculine gender precipitating itself from up-town upon down-town. A wide, steady, dense, swift stream of frock coats, polished boots and clean shirts rushes by you. The town is fresh from its toilet—clean-shaved, well-brushed, starched—as spruce and fine as one could wish. Such a crowd of fresh, complacent, well-dressed gentlemen is positively agreeable. But looking on this picture, which we have enjoyed more than once, turn to this—walk *down* Broadway from five to six in the afternoon. Ah, my masters, this is something different! Masculine New York is flowing up-town now—jaded, dusty, unstarched, wearied, *hungry*—they come from the battle-field of business, the conquered and the conquerors, evincing how desperate has been the struggle! So goes on daily this ebb and flow, and to the quiet looker-on has its philosophy and its moral.

—READER, have you read the new poem. "The Angel in the House?" It is rarely and sweetly beautiful, so do read it if you have not. It is, moreover, the sublimest testimonial ever offered to woman—the finest eulogy and the noblest offering. Its theme is home-like, down to every heart's experience, and the style is so perfectly simple that you are frequently puzzled to understand in what exists its great charm. We do not recollect when we have been so fascinated by any work; and the fact that it meets with wide appreciation and daily extending fame, is a gratifying evidence of the really true and fine taste which governs the popular mind in such matters. "The Angel in the House" is a boon to this generation. Every household into which it enters will be rendered the better by its pure, true, chaste light; and as an antidote to the spasmodic and extravagant productions recently sprung up into a short-lived fame, it is of vast benefit to literature. The author remains unknown, but this cannot long be the case. Only one portion of the poem is yet published, "The Betrothal," "The Espousal" is soon to follow.

LITERARY.

Two humorous volumes have recently appeared from the press—*The Sparrowgrass Papers*, by Cozzens, and *Plu-ri-bus-tah*, by Doesticks—which are widely different in kind and degree. *Plu-ri-bus-tah* is a sad failure. The author succeeded a short time since in obtaining a brief and unhealthy notoriety by the production of some overdone, extravagant, absurd caricatures, so strained and violent in their attempts at fun, that the humor appeared to be dragged up by the roots—a suspicion confirmed by the baldness of the present issue. Plu-ri-bus-tah is a parody on Hiawatha (will we never have done with parodies on Hiawatha?) and if we except the occasional humor evinced in the illustrations, it is a dull, heavy affair. It is filled with platitudes and commonplaces, and some of its most decided attempts at wit are borrowed. It appears to be a fanciful history of America—past, present, and prospective, and closes with a lamentable catastrophe, wherein we are shown New York in ruins, and Young America buried beneath the Almighty Dollar. (Livermore & Rudd.)

A very different kind of book is *The Sparrowgrass Papers.* Here we have delicious, unobtrusive, genuine humor, charming freshness of style, amusing incident, and unflagging interest. *The Sparrowgrass Papers* are not highly-polished and elaborated essays, distinguished by smooth sentences and perfect syntax. They are rapid, sparkling, free and easy, natural and life-like pictures of men and things—country, men and things—conceived in a genial spirit and executed with fine taste. They will prove charming summer reading for the long vacations. All who want agreeable books for the sea-side or watering-place should add this volume to their list. The two illustrations by Darley are admirable, and calculated to tempt a purchaser and secure a reader. (Derby & Jackson.)

—*Aspenwold* is a novel depicting life in Kentucky. It has slave scenes not unlike those of Uncle Tom. The first chapter reminds one of "David Copperfield; the second of "My Novel." It is somewhat incongruous mosaic, but not without considerable ability. We should think the author capable of writing an entirely good book if he would study hard enough, and have the patience to elaborate his productions with sufficient care. In his characters, he is frequently inconsistent. The principal female, the mother of the hero, although intended as something very admirable, is decidedly an unamiable character, but at the same time a very life-like one. (Livermore & Rudd.)

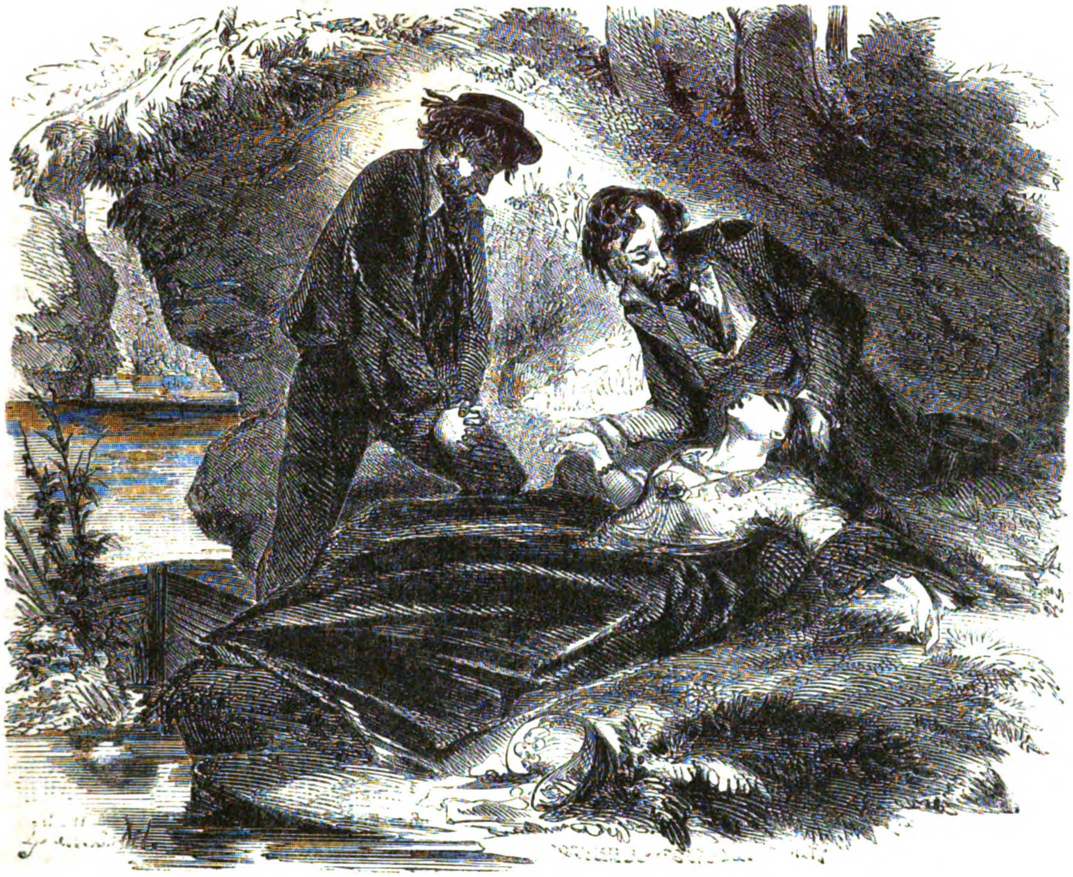
—*Irish Echoes* is a volume by John Brougham, superior, we think, to his previous issue, "A Basket of Chips." Irish Echoes contains half a dozen admirable Irish stories, full of rich humor and true Hibernian wit. They are racy, fresh reading, very much superior to the ordinary character of Irish tales, blessedly not overladen with bad spelling, and will be sure of affording the reader some hearty laughs. The illustrations by McLenan are good. (Derby & Jackson.)

—*Salad for the Social* is a new work by the author of "Salad for the Solitary," issued a few years ago. It is upon a similar plan to the first issue, evincing the same research, good taste, extensive reading, and gentlemanly scholarship. It contains papers, or compilations, on "Bookcraft," "The Humors of Law," "Mysteries of Medicine," "the Toilet," and various other subjects, in which the author gives us the results of industrious dippings into a vast range of authors of the current as well as forgotten literature. Whatever is quaint, curious, humorous, fantastic, or odd, upon the subjects treated of, is dragged up from their oblivious depths and made to enliven and enrich the page. The reader finds here compressed into four hundred pages the pith and essence of hundreds of volumes, such as would take him years to accumulate by his own researches. A book like this, therefore, is a short cut to learning. The grain is gathered, threshed, and winnowed. It would be almost better, however, for the student to glean for himself. The enjoyment of a quaint or fine passage is enhanced greatly by the pleasure of discovering it. A man walks through a florist's or bird fancier's, or a mineralogist's coldly, while he will pounce with delight upon an odd stone bedded in a mass of rock, or seize with pleasure a strange flower growing in a forest. The sweets of possession depend much upon the exertion and desire to secure. Railroads through literature are upon some considerations to be deprecated. Better let the pilgrim take up the staff and sandal shoon, and travel its highways on foot. He will thus gather strength, power, endurance, and his possessions will be the sweet morsels fairly earned by self-reliant labor. But learning-saving-machines are in accordance with the spirit of the age. The people want and clamor for them. Epitomes are the rage. We expect ere long to see learning reduced to a pill—one gulp and all over with. Books will be read by some mesmeric process by which the contents can become instantly photographed upon the brain. Meanwhile, let us enjoy the slower if not the better way of tasting what we acquire drop by drop. "Salad for the Social" is published in neat style by De Witt & Davenport.

—*The Piazza Tales* are a collection of stories by Hermann Melville, which originally appeared in Putnam's Magazine. They are fine reading, and to all who did not meet them at the time of their first appearance, we heartily recommend them. (Dix & Edwards.)

MRS. STEPHENS' NEW MONTHLY.

AUGUST, 1856.



LOST JEWELS.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

CHAPTER III.—THE SUDDEN STORM.

THERE are moments in every human life when we would gladly flee from ourselves and plunge into action of any kind, to escape from the recognition of our own memories. This recoil from the past seldom comes to early youth, for to that, memories are like the light breezes of April, with nothing but tender green foliage, and opening buds to disturb. With youth the past is so close to the present, that thought always leaps forward into the future, and in the first flush of existence that is invariably beautiful. But it is a different thing when life approaches its maturity. Then the spirit, laden down with events that have culminated, and feelings that have been shaken by many a heart storm, bends reluctantly to the tempest like the stately old forest trees laden with foliage, which bow to nothing but the inevitable tornado.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S., for the Southern District of New York.

Mabel Harrington left the old Mansion House with a quicker movement and more rapid step than was natural to her, unless some strong feeling was aroused, or some important aim to be accomplished. At such times her action was quick, almost imperious, and all the evidences of an ardent nature, fresh as youth and strong as maturity, broke forth in each movement of her person and in every thought of her mind.

She walked more and more rapidly as the distance between her and the house increased, as if the open air and wider country gave freedom to her spirit. As she walked her bright grey eyes turned from the river to the sky and abroad upon the hills, as if seeking for something in nature to which her soul might appeal for sympathy in the swell and storm of feeling that a few simple words had let loose upon her, after a sleep of many years.

"Does he know what I have felt and how I have suffered, that he stings me with such words? His father's marriage! And was I not the spirit—nay, the victim of that marriage? Why should he speak to me thus? The air was enough—the calm sleep of the winds—the fragrance. I was a girl again, till his quiet taunt awoke me. Does he think that I have lost a thought or a feeling because of this dull heavy routine of cares? Why did he speak to me in that cold tone? I have not deserved it. Heaven knows I have not deserved it from him, or from any of them!"

Mabel uttered these words aloud, as she approached the banks of the river, and her voice clear and rich with feeling, was swept out upon the wind which bore it away, mingled with fragrance from the dying leaves.

"Does he think with common men, that the impulses of youth die out and are gone? As if the passions of youth did not become the power of maturity, and mellow at last into the calm grandeur of old age. If love were not immortal, how dreary even this beautiful world would seem, yet being so, I can but look forward to another, when the shackles of this life will fall away."

It was a relief to speak aloud. The sound of her own voice came back like the sympathy she dared to claim only of the wind and the waters, that flowed on with their eternal rush of sound, like the years of life that Mabel was mourning over. She stood upon the shore, stately and motionless, her eyes full of trouble, her lips tremulous with impulsive words that betrayed a soul at once ardent and pure. The wind rose around her, and seizing upon her shawl swept it in picturesque folds about her person, half drowning her voice, or she would not have dared to give her thoughts this bold utterance.

It was this picturesque attitude that had attracted the attention of her husband in the library, and that moment he resolved to join her on the shore.

As if this resolve had been expressed to her in words, a feeling of unrest seized upon Mabel, and long before the old man was ready to come forth, she was walking rapidly across the brow of a hill that bounded the valley southward, keeping along the bank, but concealed by the undergrowth.

She paused upon a rocky cliff that broke the hill side, breathing more freely as if conscious that she had escaped some unwelcome intrusion. A boat upon the river drew her attention, and she saw within it her son and Lina floating pleasantly down the stream together.

"How happy and how young they are!" she said with a gush of gentle affection. "No cares—no broken hopes—no wishes unexpressed—no *secrets;* oh! in this lies the great happiness of existence. Until he has a secret to keep, man is, indeed, next to the angels."

Mabel sat down upon a fallen tree, covered with a drapery of pale green moss. She watched the boat in a sort of dream, as it drifted toward her. How much of the suffering she endured might yet be saved to the young persons it contained! Was not that an object worth living and enduring for? Might she not renew her youth in them?

Renew her youth? What need was there of that? In all her existence had she ever been so full of life—so vigorous of mind—so capable of the highest enjoyment? In the very prime and glory of all her faculties—wise in experience—strong from many a silent heart-struggle, what could she gain by a return of youth? Nothing! surely nothing! Yet she watched those two young persons with a vague feeling of sadness. They had life before them, a thousand dreamy delusions—a thousand alluring hopes evanescent as the apple blossoms of May, but as sweet also.

Mabel was too noble for envy, but these thoughts subdued her excitement into silent mournfulness. At first, she thought to walk slowly back and meet the young people when they landed, but something withheld her and she sat still, dreamily watching them.

She saw the boat drifting idly upon the current. The gorgeous forest leaves with which it was literally carpeted struck her eyes in rich masses of colors, as if the young people had imprisoned a portion of the sunset around their feet. She could distinguish Ben stooping forward seemingly half asleep upon his oars. All in the boat seemed tranquil and happy, like creatures of another life afloat upon the rivers of paradise; she could almost see their faces—those happy faces that made the fancy still more natural.

As she watched them a strange pain stole to her heart. She arose suddenly to her feet and, sweeping a hand across her eyes as if to clear their vision, cast long searching glances toward the boat, striving to read those young faces afar off, and thus relieve her mind of a powerful suspicion.

"Why has this thought never presented itself before?" she said with a pang of self reproach. "Has this eternal dream blinded me, or am I now mistaken? Poor children—poor Lina—is this cruel destiny to fall on you also?"

The boat came drifting toward her now in the crimson light, again enveloped in purple shadows like those fairy skiffs that glide through our dreams. Mabel watched it till her eyes filled with tears, a strange thing—for she was not a woman given to weeping, save as tears are sometimes the expression of a tender or poetic thought. Pain or wrong were things for her to endure or redress; she never wept over them.

That night the interest which she felt in these young persons blended painfully with memories that had risen, like a sudden storm, in her nature. She felt as if they were destined to carry forth and work out the drama of her own life, and that this agency was just commencing. As she stood thus wrapped in turbulent thoughts, there came through the brushwood a crash of branches and a commotion of the foliage louder than the wind could have produced.

Mabel Harrington was in no mood for companionship. She had fled from the house to be alone, and this approach startled her.

A little footpath led down the brow of the hill to a tiny promontory on which a few hickory trees were now dropping their nuts. She struck hastily into this path and descended to the river. Close to the bank, half hidden among the dying fern leaves that drooped over it, lay a miniature boat scarcely larger than an Indian canoe. It was a highly ornamented and symmetrical little craft, that any child might have propelled and which a queen fairy would have been proud to own.

Mabel sprang into the boat, and seating herself on a pile of cushions heaped in the centre, pushed out into the stream. There was no hardihood in this, she had been accustomed to action and exercise all her life, and could propel her little skiff with the skill and grace of any Indian girl.

Her boat ran out from the promontory and shot like an arrow across the water, for she trembled lest some voice should call her back, and urged her light oars with all the impetuosity of her nature.

At last, beyond hail from the shore, she looked back and saw a man standing upon the brow of the hill, leaning against the oak that had sheltered her a few moments before. Mabel paused and rested on her oars. The distance would not permit her to distinguish his features, but the size and air might have been that of her husband had his usual habits admitted of the idea. She put it aside at once, nothing could have induced the General to climb the steeps of that hill. It must be James. The father and son were alike in stature and partook of the same imposing air. Yes it must be James Harrington, and was it from him she had fled? Had he repented of the harsh words that had driven her forth and followed her with hopes of atonement? her heart rose kindly at the thought. She half turned her little boat, tempted back by that longing wish for reconciliation, which was always uppermost in her warm nature.

But then came the wholesome after-thought which had so often checked these genial impulses. She turned the boat slowly back upon its course and let it float with the current, watching the rise of land on which he stood, with sad, wistful glances, that no one saw, save the God who knows how pure they were, and how much the resolution to go on had cost him.

As the boat drifted downward, she saw the person turn as if speaking to some one, and directly a female form stood by his side. They drew close together, and seemed to be conversing eagerly. His look was no longer towards the boat; he had doubtless forgotten its existence.

Mabel held her breath, the color left her lips, and she grasped the oars with each hand, till the blood was strained back from her fingers, leaving them white as marble.

"Oh, not that! not that! I can endure anything but that! God help me! O my God, help me! if this is added to the rest, I cannot live."

Drops of perspiration sprang to her temples as she spoke. Unconsciously she expended the first strength of her anguish on the oars, and the boat shot like a mad thing into the rapids that swept round a projection of rocks and like some tormented spirit, she was borne away from the sight that had wounded her.

There was danger now. The rush of the current, tortured by hidden rocks, sent the little craft onward, as if it had been a dead leaf cast into the eddy. Mabel liked the danger and the tumult. The rising wind blew in her face. The waters sparkled and dashed around her. The frail oars bent and quivered in her hands. It was something to brave and fight against; but for this scope of action the new anguish that had swept through the soul of that woman must have smothered her.

On the little boat went, dancing and leaping down the current, recoiling with a quiver from the hidden rocks which it touched more than once, but springing vigorously back to its flight, like a bird upon the wing.

"Oh, if this be so, let me die now. Why will it not strike? How came they to make the boat so light and yet so strong? It is true! It is true! I feel it in every throb of my pulse. After this, the life that I thought so dreary, will be a lost paradise, to which, plead as I may, there is no going back. I will know, God help me, but I must know if this is a wild suspicion, or a miserable, miserable reality!"

These words bespoke the concentration of some resolves. She grasped her oars more firmly, and with a sharp glance around, put her boat upon its course. It shot through hidden rocks; it cut across the eddies recklessly as before, but all the time a single course was pursued. At last the little craft entered the mouth of a mountain stream that came sparkling down a pretty hemlock hollow in the hills. The hollow was dusky with coming night, but the tree-tops were still brightened by a red tinge from the sunset, and there was light enough to find a footpath which wound upward along the margin of the brook.

Mabel left her boat and followed this path till she reached a natural terrace in the hills, narrow and green, upon which a small, one-story house was snugly bestowed. The terrace was uncultivated, save a small garden patch close to the house, where the soil was torn and uneven from the uprooting of vegetables from the rudely-shaped beds. Sweetbrier and wild honeysuckles gave a picturesque grace to the building, at variance with the untidy state of the grounds, and there was something in the whole place more suggestive of refinement than is usual to dwellings where the inmates work hard for their daily bread.

Mabel Harrington had never been in this place before. As she approached it, the cry of a whippoorwill came up from the hollow, as if warning her away. Everything was still within the house. There was no light; the rustle of leaves with the flow of waters from the ravine, joined their mournful whispers with the wail of the night bird.

Mabel was imaginative as a girl, and this solitude depressed her; still she moved steadily towards the house, and knocked at the door.

A woman opened it, whose person was seen but indistinctly, as she stood within the small entry, holding the door with one hand; but that she was tall and proud—if not insolent—in her bearing, Mabel could easily detect.

"I wish to see Miss Agnes Barker for a moment: is she in?" said Mrs. Harrington with her usual dignified repose of manner, for however much interested, Mabel was not one to invite curiosity by any display of excitement, and it must have been a close observer who could have detected the faint quiver of her voice as she expressed this common-place wish.

"Agnes is not at home. She does not live here."

"I know. She lives at General Harrington's, up the river," replied Mabel, "but it is some weeks since she has been there, and I expected to find her with you, if you are her mother."

"I *am* her mother, madam, for want of a better. Now pray, if it is not taking a liberty, who is it that wishes to see my daughter?"

"I am Mrs. Harrington," said Mabel, quietly.

"Oh!" exclaimed the woman, prolonging the monosyllable almost into a sneer, "I did not expect this. Will you walk in while I get a light? One does not receive such guest without desiring to look them in the face."

Mabel entered the house and sat down while the woman struck a light.

"Are you alone?" she said, placing the tallow candle where its entire light fell upon her guests, while she was herself in comparative darkness.

"Yes, I am alone!" answered Mabel, looking with surprise upon the remains of that magnificent beauty which the woman still possessed.

"Then you and I are alone at last, at dark too, and nothing within call, but that eternal whippoorwill—this is an unexpected pleasure."

If the woman had hoped to terrify Mabel Harrington by these half threatening words, she was mistaken. A vague feeling of loneliness was upon her, but she had no cowardly timidity to contend with.

"You do not seem at all afraid in this lonesome spot," said the woman.

"I am seldom afraid of anything," answered Mabel with a wan smile. "I came to inquire for Miss Barker, if she is not at home can you tell me where she can be found?"

"About this time I suppose you may depend on finding her somewhere in the hills—she seldom comes in before candle-light, and not always then. Agnes loves the open air, and almost lives in it when you let her free from the schoolroom."

"Is she your only daughter?" inquired Mabel.

"She is all the daughter I have here," answered the woman curtly.

"You have managed to give her a fine education—I have seldom known a young person so thoroughly accomplished," continued Mabel with apparent calm, but keenly attentive to every word that fell from the woman's lips. "General Harrington informed me that she came highly recommended, but her attainments surprised us all."

"A poor girl who has only education to depend on should be cared for in that respect. I had nothing else to give her," said the woman. "I hope she does her duties to your satisfaction, and is humble—one of the first virtues in a governess. Is my daughter sufficiently humble for your tastes, madam?"

"Her duties are more particularly with Miss Lina, Gen. Harrington's adopted daughter, who makes no complaint against her—for myself, our intercourse is very limited."

"Yes, she has told me so. That is why I am surprised at your interest in her now!"

"We have expected her at the house for several days, and thought it strange that she did not return."

"I beg your pardon; she has been at your house every day for a week; that is what keeps her so long. It is a tiresome walk across the hills."

Mabel arose. A sickening sensation crept over her, and she went to the open door for air.

It was true then—that suspicion was all true! Agnes Barker had been in the neighborhood of her old home for a week, without the knowledge of its mistress. That very girl had met James Harrington in the hills Her own eyes had seen them standing side by side in the sunset.

"Are you sick or tired?" said the woman, coming toward her as she stood cold and shuddering under this conviction.

"Neither," answered Mabel, gathering up her strength, but pressing both hands upon her heart beneath the crimson folds of her shawl. "If Miss Barker comes to the house again she will have the goodness to see that I am informed. Miss Lina is anxious to renew her studies."

"Certainly, I will tell her what you say," answered the woman almost rudely. "She will be delighted that you have taken the trouble to search for her here, when she has been weeks together in your house without seeing you."

"It is enough that you give my message faithfully," answered Mabel, with gentle firmness. "I must speak with her before the duties of her situation are resumed. Good night."

"Good night to you," muttered the woman, as Mabel walked away. "I understand you, never doubt that, but it is a late discovery that Agnes is beautiful, and keen enough for a dozen such as you. I thought the arrangement would work!"

With these words the woman closed her door and went into the house, while Mrs. Harrington made the best of her way down the footpath which she had threaded, though the hollow was filled with gloom, and the whippoorwill called mournfully after her as she went.

Her boat lay where she had left it in the mouth of the creek. As she stepped into it a cry broke from her lips, and turning, she looked wildly up the hollow. A woman sprang over the boat as she stooped for the oars, and with a single leap cleared the bank, landing with a bound in the footpath above her.

One sharp glance she cast behind, then darted away as if eager to bury herself in the hemlock gloom.

The leap had been so sudden and the whole progress so rapid, that Mabel scarcely saw the woman, but she remembered after, that her dress was dusky red, and that a velvet cloak swept from her shoulders downward to the ground, half torn from her person in its abrupt movements. As she stood lost in amazement at this singular apparition, Mabel fancied that she heard the dip of oars, and could detect the dim outline of a boat making up the river.

She sat down mute, and troubled, looking after what seemed at best a floating shadow; the night had darkened rapidly, and instead of the new moon which should have silvered the sky, came billows of black, angry clouds, in which the thunder began to roll and mutter hoarse threats of a storm. Frightened by the brooding tempest, Mabel pushed her boat out from the shore, and began to row vigorously homeward; but she had scarcely got into deep water when the clouds became black as midnight; the winds rose furiously, lashing the waters and rushing fiercely through the tree tops, while burst after burst of thunder broke over the hills. She could only see her course clearly when flashes of lightning shot at intervals through the trees, and broke in gleams of scattered fire among the waves, now dashing and leaping angrily around her.

Mabel was excited out of her anxieties by this turmoil. There was something in the force and suddenness of the storm that aroused all her courage. The vexed trees were bent and torn by the winds. The river was lashed into a sea of foam, over which her frail boat leaped and quivered like a living thing; but she sat steady in the midst, pale and firm, taking advantage of each gleam of lightning to fix her course, and facing the storm with a steady bravery which had no fear of death.

Still the tempest rose and lashed itself into fury from the rocky coast to the depths of the stream, and the little boat went plunging through it, keeping the brave woman safe. The oars were useless as rushes in her hands. The waves leaped upward as the wind lashed them, and at times rushed entirely over her. It was a fearful sight, that noble woman, all alone with the storm! so close to death and yet so resolute! Blacker and nearer grew the clouds torn by whirlwinds, and shooting out lurid gleams of lightning, that flashed and curled along the water like fiery serpents chasing each other into their boiling depths. So great was the tumult that another sound, which came like a smothered howl through the storm, seemed but a part of it. Thus Mabel was unconscious of this new danger, till a glare of lightning swept everything else aside, and bearing directly toward her, she saw a huge steamer ploughing through the tempest, on her downward course.

Scarce had she time to recoil with horror from the danger, when it was wrapped in darkness again, and she could only guess of its approach by the cabin windows that glared upon her nearer and nearer, like great fiery eyes half blinded by the storm. Mabel nerved herself, and with a desperate effort bent her strength upon the oars. But the heave of the waters tore one from her grasp, and the other remained useless. Human strength was of no avail now. She was given up to the tempest, and could only cling to the reeling boat mute with horror, still with a thought of those she loved vital at her heart. Another sheet of lightning, blue and livid, rolled down the hills, and in it, standing upon a spur of rocks, she saw James Harrington, either in life or in spirit, looking forth upon the river. His form had the deadly hue of the light. His garments shook to the storm. The pale flame quivered around him a moment, and he was engulphed in darkness again.

Mabel flung up her hands with a cry that cut through the storm like an arrow.

"Save me! save me! oh, my God! my God!"

Her pale hands quivered in the lightning. The shrieks that rang from her white lips were smothered in the fierce wind. The tortured boat seemed flinging her out to utter despair.

A roar that was not of the elements, now broke through all the tumult. There came a rush—an upheaving of the waters, which flung her high into the darkness—a blow that made her little bark quake in all its timbers—a plunge—a black rush of waters. She was hurled beneath the wheels of the steamer—engulphed in utter darkness. It was her last struggle with the storm.

CHAPTER IV.

THE UNEXPECTED PASSENGER.

While Ben Benson was landing Ralph Harrington and Lina, he lost sight of the boat which had so effectually aroused his interest, and when he was ready to put out again, it was lost in the inequalities of the shore.

Ben put out into the river, bearing towards the opposite bank at first, but meeting with no signs of his object, he returned again, consuming time, and thus giving considerable start to Mrs. Harrington's little craft.

As Ben neared the land again, he saw a gleam of crimson garments through the evergreens that fringed the rocky shore, and remembering the shawl which Mabel had on, was overjoyed to know that she had landed, and was comparatively safe from the storm, which grew more and more assured in its signs.

With his anxieties thus appeased, Ben rowed his boat more securely to the nearest point that promised a safe landing, resolved to court the recognition of his mistress, and when she was weary of her ramble, convey her safely home again.

When he reached the desired point, Ben could see that the crimson garments were moving through the undergrowth with a pace more rapid than any mere rambler would have chosen; but what surprised him was the course pursued down the river, while his mistress, if frightened by the clouds, would doubtless have turned homeward.

Ben stood up in his boat and waved his tarpaulin with energy.

"Hallo — Madam — Mrs. Harrington, I say, there's thunder and war ahead, I tell you. Don't go too far. Don't go out of sight. The water's a-getting roughish now, and the woods won't be safe after the clouds burst!"

Ben sent these words through an impromptu speaking trumpet made with one hand curved around his mouth. He was well pleased with the effect, for the red garments began to flutter, and he saw that the wearer was moving rapidly down the hill towards the point where he lay.

"That's what I call obeying signals at once!" said the honest fellow, seating himself in the stern of his boat. "But she knows as Ben Benson wouldn't take the liberty of hurrying her if he hadn't a good reason for what he's a-doin'—not he!"

And with this complacent reflection, Ben withdrew the tobacco from his mouth, and sent it far into the water, remembering Mrs. Harrington's objections to the weed, and ready to send his life after that, if it could afford her a moment's gratification.

"Ben," said he, looking after the tobacco as it was tossed from one wave to another, and shaking his fist after it in virtuous indignation, "that's a habit as you ought to be ashamed on, Ben Benson, a habit as no dog wouldn't take from you on any account, yet you've just kept it up chawing and chawing from morning till night, till she'll catch you at it some day, and then you'll have done for yourself, and no mistake. I should like to see her a-settin' in your boat arter that. Tobackee 'll be the ruin of you yit, Ben. Grog's nothing to it."

A light step upon the moss silenced the boatman, but he kept his position, resolved to be very severe with himself for his manifold sins, this of tobacco being uppermost.

"Mr. Benson, you are kind, I am so much obliged!"

Ben started. The voice was a pleasant one, but his rough heart sunk low with disappointment—the tones were not those of Mrs. Harrington.

"I could not possibly have reached home on foot," said the same sweet voice, and a young lady sprang lightly into the boat. "I hope the river will prove safe!"

"I was waiting for Mrs. Harrington, marm, and mistook you for her—that's all," said Ben, without lifting his eyes to the singular girl that stood close to him.

"Mrs. Harrington has gone down the river long ago—she passed that point of land with the last sunbeam," said the young girl, seating herself comfortably among the cushions.

"Are you sartain of that ere?" questioned Ben, taking up his oars hurriedly. "Just give me her bearing, and I'll show you what rowing is."

"You can't possibly have a better pilot than I am," answered the lady, laughing till a row of closely set but uneven teeth were visible in the waning light. "In searching for Mrs. Harrington, you will naturally take me homeward; when she is found, I will allow myself to be set ashore."

"The shore's no fit place for a young gal arter dark," said Ben gruffly, but pushing his boat out into the stream. "For my part, I can't make out what brings you up into the hills so often. Why don't you come home for good and all? Miss Lina don't want any more vacation, I reckon."

"Oh, my health isn't quite established yet, Mr. Benson," said the girl, looking at the boatman with a sidelong glance of her black, almond-shaped eyes, a glance that Ben was internally comparing to that of the rattlesnake, when he shrank off into a hollow of the rocks.

"I shouldn't think it very wholesome to be out so much at night!" said Ben.

"Oh, I live on fresh air, and love it best when moist with dew!" answered the girl.

"If it ain't moist with something stronger than dew afore long, I loose my guess!" muttered Ben, looking upward. "If this night don't see a reg'lar tornado, I'll give up—beat."

For a short time Ben plied his oars, casting anxious glances down the shore, hoping to find Mrs. Harrington and her boat safe in some inlet or cove, waiting for them.

"In course," said Ben, muttering as usual to himself. "In course, she'd know, as I was sure to come. What on the Lord's arth is Ben Benson good for, but to follow arter and tend on her? The king of all the Sandwich Islands couldn't have a higher business than that, let alone a poor feller of a boatman, as has circumwented his sea voyages down to a pair of oars and a passenger that's not over agreeable."

"Whom are you talking to, Mr. Benson?" inquired the young lady, wasting a smile on the moody boatman, though the threatening sky made her somewhat anxious about her own safety.

"To an individual as calls hisself Ben Benson. He's a feller as bears with my faults better than anybody else, as I knows on, and one as is rather particular about being intruded on, when he's holding a private conversation with hisself. That's the individual, Miss Agnes, as I was a holding a council with."

"And you would a little rather have no interruption—is that it?" said the lady. "Well, well, I can be silent, you shall see that!"

"Doubtful!" muttered Ben, using his oars with fresh vigor.

The girl he called Agnes, folded her cloak about her and settled down among the cushions, casting wistful glances at the sky. "Look," she said at last, pointing upward, "those small lead-colored clouds, how darkly they drift together! Did you ever see a flock of pigeons flying over the western woods, Mr. Benson?"

"Knew she wouldn't do it," muttered Ben, with his eyes bent on the clouds.

"See, see!" cried the girl. "The sky is black—I have seen the same thing!"

"But them was nothing but innocent birds a flying after something to eat," said Ben, "These ere clouds, Miss Agnes, has got a good many unroofed housen', and shipwrecks, and trees broken in two, and torn up by the roots, in 'em, to say nothing of this ere boat as may be upsot any minute."

The girl turned pale; her black eyes shone with sudden fear.

"Do you think there is really any danger, Mr. Benson?"

"Danger? Of course there's danger! What did I follow arter that little boat for, if there wasn't no danger?"

"Perhaps—perhaps," said Agnes tremulously, "it would be safer on shore. The walk will not be much now. What do you say to running ashore?"

"There'll be a howling among the rocks afore you get round the first point, that 'ud take your breath; besides, when the winds begin to rush ther'll be a crashing down of trees, and broken limbs will be flying thick enough. No, no—unsartain as the river is, you'd better keep still. I don't want your death on my conscience, any how."

"But can you swim if we should capsize?" questioned Agnes, growing pale and cold.

"Swim, can Ben Benson swim?" cried the boatman with a hoarse laugh. "Well, I should think that he can swim a trifle ."

The girl fixed her black eyes upon him. They were large and bright with terror.

"Fast, pull fast," she said, "let me help you—is there anything in which I can help you? How slow the boat goes—pull, pull!"

"We are agin the wind, and its getting strongish," answered Ben.

"What can we do?" cried out the girl clasping her hands. "Hear how it howls—how the trees begin to moan! Is not the storm at its height now?"

"You'll see by and by," said Ben, bowing his moist forehead down to the sleeve of his jacket, and wiping away the perspiration that was now falling from it like rain.

"Oh, what will become of us?" shrieked the girl.

"What has become of *her?*" echoed Ben, casting sharp despairing glances toward the shore, which was now darkened, and in a turmoil.

"There is my home—there, there, on the side hill. A light is just struck in the window. Set me on shore—oh, Mr. Benson, do set me on shore!"

"Not till I find *her*," answered Ben, resolutely, "you would get in, so make the best of it."

The girl grew white as death.

"Let me ashore, or it will be my death—I am sick with terror," she pleaded.

Ben did not appear to listen. He was looking wildly down the stream, right and left, with despair in his glances.

"Where is she? What can have become of her?" he cried out at last, sinking forward on his oars, and allowing the boat to struggle for herself against the wind.

"At home, no doubt," answered the girl, struck with a selfish thought, in which there was hope of safety.

"How! What?" exclaimed Ben, fiercely, "at home!"

"No doubt she left her boat in some cove and went home along the shore," persisted the girl. "She would be sure to put in somewhere!"

"Ben's face lighted up, and his eyes glowed with hope.

"It may be—of course it is. She went back long ago, no doubt on it," he exclaimed, joyfully. "Why Ben Benson, what a precious old fool you was not to think of that. Miss Agnes, I'll set you ashore now anywhere you'll pint out, if the boat lives through the operation."

"Now, now!" cried the girl, breathless with terror, "strike for land anywhere—I know the shore. Only put me on dry land again—it's all I ask."

Ben altered his course with a great effort, and forced a passage to the broken shore. He was too busy in preserving his boat from being dashed upon the rocks, to remark with what eager selfishness the girl left him, only uttering a quick ejaculation, and darting away without thanks. By the time he could look around she had plunged into a neighboring ravine, and he saw no more of her.

Though the current was running high against him, Ben had the whole force of the wind to urge him on, and his steady seamanship made the progress up stream less dangerous than the descent had been. But the toil was great and every muscle of his brawny arms rose to its full strain as he bent all his strength upon the oars. But with his greatest anxieties at rest Ben cared little for this. With no life but his own at stake, the tempest was nothing to the brave man.

But it grew terrible. The boat was more than once hurled out of water. The waves dashed over him; the winds carried off his hat and beat fiercely against his head, sweeping the long hair over his face. Again and again the current swept his boat around, drifting it back with a force he could not resist, sometimes close to the shore, sometimes out in the torrent of waters. It was impossible now to see his course, except by the lightning. The entire darkness baffled him more than the storm.

Once when the boat was seized upon and hurled backward. Ben saw innumerable lights sweeping by in the fog between him and the shore, and he uttered a shout of wild thanksgiving that the steamer had not run him down. As the water heaved him to and fro, a glare of lightning revealed this monster boat, moving downward, and—oh, horror of horrors! Mabel Harrington, just as the vortex engulphed her. Two white arms were flung upward. Her hair streamed in the lightning. The deathly white face was turned shoreward.

The might of twenty men was in his arms then. He flung back the rushing waves with his oars, and from a will fiercer than his strength, forced his boat toward her. In a minute the darkness of death was around him. Blasts of wind and great gushes of rain swept over him. He shouted aloud. He beat the waters madly with his oars. He called upon God for one more flash of lightning.

It came. He saw a distant steamer, an up-turned boat, and something darker than the foam heaving upon the waters.

"Hold on! Hold on!—I'm coming—I'm coming—it's Ben—it's Ben. Oh God, give me light!"

He was answered. A crash of thunder—a trail of fire—and an old cedar tree on the shore flamed up with the light he had prayed for.

It flamed up and Ben saw a man plunge from the rocks into the boiling waters. He bent to the oar, his boat rushed through the waves, and as he came one way, that white face moved steadily from the shore The waters were buffeted fiercely around it. Some mighty power seemed to sweep back the storm from where it moved.

It disappeared, rose and sunk again. Ben pushed his boat to the spot where he had seen Mabel disappear. His bow dashed against the little boat already broken in twain, and its fragments broke upon the water. He looked wildly about. The face was gone. The dark heap which he had taken for Mabel, had disappeared. Ben's strong arms began to tremble; tears of anguish met the beating rain, as it dashed against his face. Despair seized upon him. He dashed his oars into the bottom of the boat and stood up, ready for a plunge. He would never go back and say that his mistress had been suffered to drown before his face. His clasped hands were uplifted—the boat reeled under him—he was poised for the mad plunge!

No, his hands fell. A hoarse shout broke from him.

"Here, here I am! here—away!"

He seized the oars again, looking wildly around, for the voice that had hailed him by name, up from the deep, as it seemed. It came again, and close by the boat that grand head appeared struggling for life.

Ben struck out his oars.

"Do not move—do not strike, or you may kill her yet!"

"Is she there? Can you hold on?" cried Ben, trembling in every limb of his stout frame.

A hand seized one side of the boat. Close to the manly head he had seen, was the marble face of Mabel Harrington, half veiled by tresses of wet hair. Ben fell upon his knees, and plunging his arms into the waves, drew her into the boat.

"For the shore—for your life!" shouted James Harrington, refusing to be helped, but clinging to the boat. "No, no—strike out; I will hold on—pull—pull!"

Ben took off his coat, and rolling it in a bundle, placed it under Mabel Harrington's head. It was all he could do. The boat was a third full of water, and he had nothing else.

"Get in—get in—or she will be drowned over again!" he pleaded, seizing James Harrington by the shoulders, and dragging him over the side. Get down, keep her head out of water, and it'll take a worse storm than this to keep me back."

Harrington fell rather than sat down, and took Mabel in his arms, close to a heart so chilled that it had almost ceased beating. But as her cold face fell upon his bosom, a glow of life came back to it, with a pang of unsupportable feeling. It was not joy—it was not sorrow—but the warmth in his veins seemed like a sweet poison, which would end in death.

He put the numb and senseless form aside with a great effort, resting the head upon Ben's coat. Twice he attempted to speak, but his trembling lips uttered nothing but broken moans.

"Take her," he said to Ben, "take her, and I will pull the oars."

"You haven't life enough in you, sir," pleaded Ben, shrinking from the proposal.

"I am strong again," said Harrington, placing himself on the seat and taking the oars. "See!"

The boat plunged heavily shoreward. Ben held his mistress with a sort of terror at the sacrilege. His brawny arms trembled around her. He turned his face to the storm, rather than allow his eyes to rest upon her. But James Harrington had no compassion; he still kept to the oars.

At last they shot into a point of the shore, formed by two or three jutting rocks. Harrington dropped the oars, and the two men lifted Mabel Harrington from the boat, and bore her to a slope of the hill. No shelter was in sight. The sudden storm was abating, but rain still dropped in showers from the trees.

"Where can we convey her? What shall we do?" said Harrington, looking around in dismay. "She will perish before we can obtain warmth, if she is not already gone."

Ben had flung down his coat. They laid her upon it. James Harrington knelt upon the turf, and lifted her head to his knee. The face was pale as death; purple shadows lay about the mouth, and under the eyes; her flesh was cold as marble.

Again the deathly cold came creeping to Harrington's heart. He shuddered from head to foot, "She is dead—she is dead!" broke from his chilled lips.

"Oh, Mr. Harrington, Mr. Harrington, what can we do? What can we do?" groaned Ben, clasping his huge hands, and crying like a child over the poor lady. "She isn't dead—don't! That word is enough to kill a poor miserable feller, as wanted to die for her and couldn't."

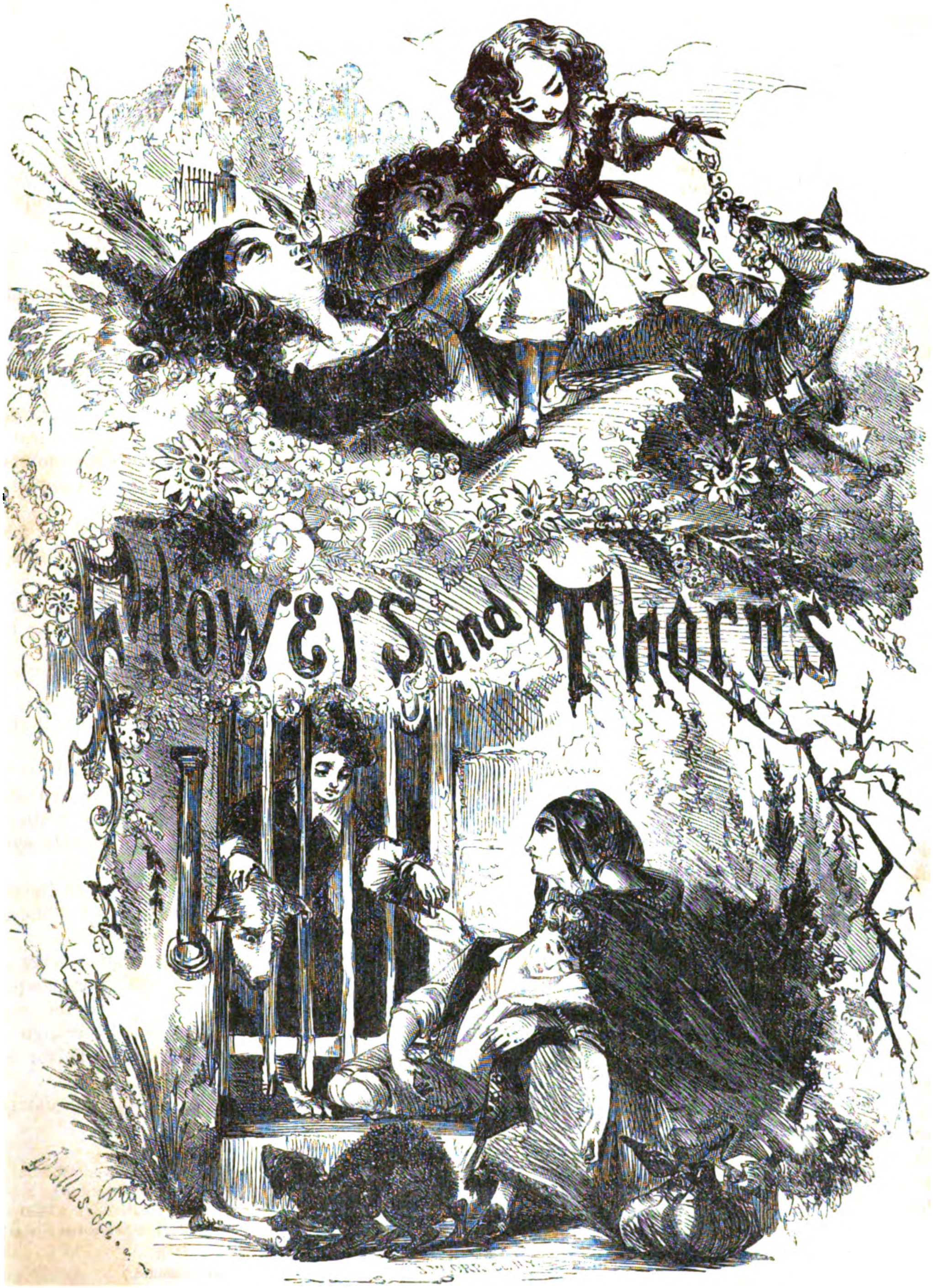
His only answer was a low moan from James Harrington.

*** In order to secure "LOST JEWELS" from unauthorized publication in England, the manuscript has been submitted to an English gentleman, who has made such additions as entitle him to a legal copyright in England. As its Editor, consequently, he has entered it at Stationers' Hall, London, before publication here.

(To be continued.)

THE POETRY OF THE PENCIL,

BY J. A. DALLAS.


Flowers and Thorns
Dallas del.

LOVE IN '76.

AN INCIDENT OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLANCHE DEARWOOD."

CHAPTER IV.

ROSE's consternation at this discovery was very great, but it was only evinced by the slightest possible start. The cry that rose to her lips was instantly suppressed. The quickness with which she obtained command over herself was surprising. In an instant, she had assumed the most nonchalant air.

"Pray walk in, Major Cleveland," said she, dropping upon a sofa, coolly, and playing with her fan in an unconcerned manner. "You've come opportunely, sir. Pray let me make you acquainted with Captain Fuller. A friend of my father's, sir—a neighbor. Captain Fuller, Major Cleveland. Allow me to commend you, gentlemen, to each other's better acquaintance."

"A rebel officer!" said the major, stalking stiffly into the room, "this is really very extraordinary."

"Let me see you shake hands, gentlemen," continued Rose, coolly, without noticing the major's manner; "for here, you know, you must be friends. If you like to cut each other's throats elsewhere, so be it; but, of course, you sheathe your swords, and swear peace in the presence of a lady."

"Miss Elsworth well rebukes us," said the major, walking over and offering his hand. Armstrong took it ceremoniously.

"Now, gentlemen," said Rose, "sit down. You, major, shall have a seat upon the sofa by my side. Captain Fuller, please take the chair near you."

The two officers took their respective seats in some constraint; and Rose, notwithstanding the peril of her lover, could scarcely refrain from an outburst of laughter at the picture of awkwardness, reserve, and embarrassment they together presented.

"Now, you see," said she, "I am between you, and shall prevent warfare. I here proclaim a truce. The captain, major, wants to join our ball to-night. I have promised him my hand the next after yours."

The major did not reply, for he was intent upon scrutinizing Walter through his eye-glass, for the major, as we have said, was something of a coxcomb. His manner grew grave and important as he did so.

"I'm quite ready, Miss Elsworth," said he, "to laugh at a joke, but really I cannot understand——"

"Why two gentlemen cannot meet under my father's roof, as his guests, and not fall to tearing each other to pieces! Is it the modern way to make war in parlors, instead of the field?"

"Strange, very strange," resumed the major, without replying to Rose, still closely scrutinizing Walter. "Your pardon, Captain Fuller, but I cannot help remarking that you closely resemble a description I have received of one Captain Armstrong."

"Dear me," said Rose, "and who is Captain Armstrong, pray?"

"A rebel, madam."

"I like him for that."

"A spy."

"But what has all this to do with Captain Fuller? I have known the captain, major, for some years, and I think you can take my word for it, he is no spy."

"Do Captain Fuller and Captain Armstrong wear the same colors?"

"All continental officers wear the same colors," said Walter.

"The same complexion, height, and——" rising, walking over to Walter and pointing to his scarf, "the same love tokens? Does Captain Fuller wear Captain Armstrong's scarf, worked with Captain Armstrong's name?"

Walter's scarf was a present from Rose, with his name embroidered upon it. Most unfortunately, neither Walter nor Rose had observed that the name was partially exposed. This discovery therefore startled, and threw them both into consternation.

"Miss Elsworth," said the major, freezingly polite, "I'm under the necessity of a disagreeable duty. I am compelled to consider our truce at an end. Young sir, you are my prisoner."

The major walked towards the window, but Walter drew his sword and threw himself before him.

"If you speak aloud," said Walter, "or attempt to call aid, I will strike you dead. I shall not yield without resistance. If you molest me, blood will be shed."

The major smiled, and drew a small pocket-pistol from his breast, cocked it, and placed it on a table before him; then drew his sword and placed it by its side.

"I am better armed than you supposed, sir," said he; "it would be awkward for any collision to occur in the presence of a lady, and yet I shall not hesitate to do my duty. If you are really Captain Fuller, I shall be very glad to shake hands and drink a glass of wine with you; if Captain Armstrong, you *must* become my prisoner."

"I have but one reply to make," answered Walter; "if you attempt to arrest me, I shall defend myself—and will escape if I can."

While these words were exchanging, Walter stood near, and with his back to the window. The major stood near the centre of the apartment, with a table before him. Rose, meanwhile, unobserved, had closed the door; and standing erect by a chair, with pale cheek, glittering eye, and dilated nostril, watched the progress of the scene.

At this juncture, a couple of shots were heard, and suddenly a figure came bounding through the window into the room, followed almost instantaneously by two soldiers. The soldiers, surprised to find themselves in the presence of their commander, fell back and stood erect. The pursued was no less than Mr. Metcalf, the schoolmaster, who, upon seeing Walter, ran up to him, exclaiming—

"Bless me, Captain Armstrong——"

"Oh, then, he *is* Captain Armstrong," broke in the major.

"All is lost!" said Rose, and dropped into the chair by her side.

"Eh? what?" exclaimed the poor pedagogue, a good deal confused, and with a bewildered idea of being guilty of some mischief.

"What was the cause of those shots fired now?" inquired the major.

"This fellow, sir, attempted to pass without the countersign," responded one of the men.

"You see, sir," said Mr. Metcalf, whose droll humor could not be silenced by the occasion or the presence, "you see, sir, I was just about to enter to call on my friend Mr. Elsworth, to sip an afternoon glass with him, when a big-booted fellow cried out, halt. Now, sir, the idea of asking a man well in both legs to halt, is preposterous——"

"Pshaw!" interrupted the major, and with a significant gesture, he motioned the men to Walter's side. They stepped up, and placed their hands on his shoulders.

"You will resign your sword now, I trust, Captain Armstrong. Resistance would be entirely useless."

"I am, indeed, your prisoner." He dropped his sword upon the floor, and folded his arms.

"I am desirous of giving you," said the major, "every opportunity to disprove your identity with Captain Armstrong. I chance to know that gentleman's handwriting. There is a desk with pen and ink. Will you stand that test?"

"That would never do," muttered Metcalf, aside, "there is not one of his pot-hooks that wouldn't hang him."

"I decline to do or say anything," was Walter's reply to the major's request.

Mr. Elsworth, alarmed by the shots and the confusion, now entered the room. He started back in dismay upon seeing Walter a prisoner in the hands of his guest.

"I regret to say, my dear Elsworth, that this gentleman must for a few hours remain my prisoner. A mere form, sir, which my duty requires me to see enforced. He will, doubtless, be free in a few days. I shall have to make use of one of your out-houses, sir. It is really a pity that the captain must be deprived of the dance to night, but I will take care that his confinement shall not be severe."

"This, sir," said Rose, starting to her feet with a flushed face, "is a shameful breach of hospitality. Captain Armstrong is my father's guest, no less than yourself. Every consideration of delicacy and honor requires you to consider him so."

"Miss Elsworth, I could wish you not to consider me wrong or cruel in this."

"I judge, sir, by what I see."

"You are severe."

"I am glad you find me so."

"Will you not say peace?"

"War, Major Cleveland, to the last."

"Daughter, more courtesy."

"Oh! father, they may chain and bind our poor country, but they cannot find a way to chain a free woman's tongue."

Rose walked the floor with blazing eye and cheek. The major gave his command, and Walter was led away under guard. The pedagogue crept into a corner crestfallen. Mr. Elsworth, troubled and bewildered, sat down, pressing his hand to his brow. Major Cleveland had stepped into the hall, and given his orders respecting the prisoner to a subaltern. As he did so, a sudden thought seemed to flash on Rose's mind; and, upon his re-entering the room, her whole manner changed, and flinging herself upon the sofa, she burst into laughter.

"Really, Major Cleveland, this has been an absurd scene. Poor fellow! I couldn't bear his discomfited looks, and so out of old companionship, what could I do less than stand up for him? There won't be anything positively serious, will there, eh? I should be sorry to have it so, inasmuch as he fell into the trap under my father's roof. But, don't you think, major, I made a good champion? It was really presumptuous for the fellow to come here, though. These rustic clowns thrust themselves everywhere."

Major Cleveland stared, and exclaimed—

"What, Miss Elsworth, Captain Armstrong then is nothing——"

"Nothing in the world, I assure you, but a harmless country lad. Do tell me, major, am I not a good actor?"

"Excellent!" cried he, but at a loss to know whether the previous or the present scene was acted.

"Your arm, major. There come some of the guests. I remember that my hand is for you in the first dance."

Major Cleveland offered his arm, and they left the room together. Mr. Elsworth threw up his arms in astonishment at this conduct, and Metcalf scratched his head with great perplexity.

"I really could have supposed," said the major, in Rose's ear, still unable to comprehend her conduct, "that this American stood high in your esteem."

"Oh, I like him well enough. He is among the best the country affords, but that is very bad, you know."

"Then you bear me no malice?"

"Not enough to kill a gnat."

"Ah, Miss Elsworth, this assurance gives me the greatest pleasure."

"Don't hurt the poor fellow though, major, I beg of you. I should be quite sorry if anything happened to him. He is a good-natured, useful neighbor enough—an unpolished jewel, papa calls him."

"The affair will prove a bagatelle, dear madam, I assure you."

"Ah, major, our social wants in this community are lamentable enough, when we are obliged to content ourselves with such poor substitutes as you have seen, for all the polish and manner of London circles."

"Lamentable, indeed, Miss Elsworth."

"The war brings one boon, at least," continued the lady, "the society of gentlemen."

"Very true, indeed," was the complacent rejoinder.

The major handed her to a seat in the parlor, and begged a moment's leave from her side.

"Humph, Major Cleveland," muttered she as he walked away, "I'll so wheedle you this night you shall cry enough to a woman, even if it so happens that you have never done it to a man. So look to it, my valiant major!"

CHAPTER V.

It was very evident that Major Cleveland was completely fascinated by Rose; and from the moment of Walter's unlucky discovery, our heroine exerted all her powers to render the control she had over him secure and lasting. Her power of pleasing was very great. Few men could resist the charm of her smile, or the fascination of her glance. Her spirits were fine, her wit joyous, her manner agreeable beyond description, and her beauty superior. It would have been hard if a colder man than Major Cleveland had not yielded to a combination so powerful and so rare. As for the major, he was completely overcome. He was spellbound by her side. He was enraptured, and did not attempt to conceal his rapture. Rose smiled upon him, shot glances at him from her glorious eyes; her wit played about him in one incessant stream, spirited, brilliant, glad; she tickled him with the adroitest compliments, flattered him in a thousand ways; in short, with diplomatic skill, played her part to perfection. Bold, dazzling, and daring, she conducted the intrigue, and yet all the while her heart shrunk from the course. She felt, however, that Walter's only hope of safety depended upon the extent of the influence she could obtain over the English officer; and, although ready to allure him on, step by step, even at the risk of being harshly condemned as a coquette and a flirt, the magnitude of the interest at stake would not permit her to hesitate a moment in the course she was pursuing. To save Walter Armstrong was her resolve—she could not be scrupulous about the means.

Twilight was settling down, and while those of the guests already arrived were gathered upon the piazza or about the lawn, Rose and her admirer, by a movement which the major must have learned in his tactics, found themselves sauntering off apart from the rest through the mazy turns of the garden. They came to a bower, and the major gently urged Rose to take a seat upon a rustic bench there provided. She did so, secretly trembling, but resolved to dare all, when all was at stake.

"Do you know, dear Miss Elsworth," said he, bending over her, "that I could wish to see you in these troubled times united to some one who could afford you the protection which only a husband can extend?"

"Ah, Major Cleveland!" said Rose sighing behind her fan, and dropping her head plaintively. He took her hand.

"I cannot be mistaken in the surmise that you love already."

Her head dropped still lower. Ah, major, could you have seen the mischievous smile upon her lip!

"Miss Elsworth! Rose!" He bent over her until his cheek touched her curls, and whispered, "Confide in me. I am your friend."

"I believe you, Major Cleveland. I—I—really sir—I implore you to believe me—I have nothing to confide."

This she said stammeringly, confusedly, and with agitation. Ah, Rose, you cunning, adroit, skillful actress!

"Do not be offended, Miss Elsworth. I have your interest at heart. Pardon me—but Captain Arbald —"

A little start and appearance of agitation from Rose.

"Captain Arbald, Rose, believes, or at least hopes, that he is acceptable to you. I am very deeply his friend—very deeply yours."

"It is very pleasant to hear you say so, Major Cleveland."

"Then you do look upon him with favor?"

"Alas, Major Cleveland, these wars, these wars!"

"They separate us from those who are dearest to us—they come between us and our hearts' affections."

"Do they not daily threaten us with a heart widowhood?"

"Ah, Miss Elsworth—Rose, let me call you—I see you are thinking of the young captain. You love him!"

"Major!" exclaimed Rose, turning suddenly to him, "let me beg of you one thing—let me hear you promise what I will ask you. You assure me you are my friend. Then grant me a pledge. Promise me to—to protect——"

"The captain——"

"He, who is to be my husband."

"You delight me. Are you then pledged?"

"We are."

"The young rascal. He never told me so. And jealous enough, I'll be sworn he is, to see me monopolize your society as I do."

"His life is almost in your hands. Often you can save him from danger."

"Will you marry ——?"

"Yes." Very low and abashed.

"I give you the pledge then, you ask. Make him your husband, and for your sake I will defend and protect him to the extent of my power."

"Oh, major, you make me happy. I have been tormented at the prospect of some dreadful fate befalling him. I am, major, a foolish girl—I place, perhaps absurdly, so much confidence in your ability to rescue him from many dangers—that I should like—should like—sir, let me wear this ring" (slipping one from his finger) "as a friendly pledge that you will be his guardian, his watchful protector."

"Lady, let me kiss the ring upon your hand, as a formal seal to my pledge. Your husband, lady, while under my command shall be my especial care."

"Do not not mention this to him, major. His high sense of honor would spurn such a guardianship. For my sake you will keep your pledge—let him not know of it."

"As you wish, my dear Miss Elsworth."

They rose and sauntered towards home.

The major was in a state of rapture. The reader has perhaps divined the reason of his strong desire for the union of Rose with his young officer. He was enamored of her charms—he believed that if married and frequently a resident of the camp—as he meant she should be—he should have time to weave those fascinations around her, which he believed capable of ensnaring the most virtuous, and which indeed, he possessed to a remarkable degree. Arbald was a creature of his making—a pliant, shallow instrument. He could be got rid of, and in due time the fruit should be ripe for plucking—all the more valuable for the exercise of ingenuity and stratagem necessary for securing it.

Rose in part penetrated his object—that is, she felt assured that some libertine scheme was behind his desire for her union with Captain Arbald—and the whole scene just related was managed with this knowledge as a guide—and with some such result in view as that attained.

The promise obtained from the major was in view of a bold and daring plan vaguely and dimly forming in her mind. Inasmuch as Captain Armstrong could only be saved by some desperate means, her quick wit had suggested the way it might be done—through the medium of the spell she held over Cleveland, and by an act which though she shrunk from performing, she yet was resolved to attempt. She had adroitly drawn a promise from the major which left her at liberty to construe in favor of any person she might elect. *He* thought it was her intention to marry Arbald—*she*, secretly meant it for Walter, and if necessary, she was resolved by some means to clandestinely marry him that very night, if no other chance offered for his safety.

"Bold! bold!" she muttered to herself, "what will he think of me? But it must be done. He will understand—forgive."

She did not know how circumstances were to precipitate her action, and force her to a rapid decision as to her course.

After leaving the bower they walked slowly but by devious paths toward the house. The entrapped and fascinated major more than once arrested their progress to hang over some flower, or by some other stratagem seeking to prolong the interview.

Suddenly the two young officers, Arbald and Marvin, came hurrying towards them, in some excitement of manner.

"The rebel has escaped," exclaimed Arbald.

"Ha!" cried Cleveland, "What do you mean? How?"

"It is uncertain how," said Marvin.

"He must be about the grounds concealed somewhere. He could not have passed the guard. Put your fellows upon his track."

Rose, whose blood tingled with wild delight at the intelligence, at this moment heard the slightest possible movement in the shrubbery behind her. She gave a rapid glance, and saw a form gliding away she could have sworn was that of her lover's. A cry of surprise and terror almost escaped from her lips, and for a single instant her presence of mind forsook her. For an instant only, however. The major had been meanwhile giving some rapid orders to the officers.

"Hunt him out," said he; "I wouldn't lose my hold upon him for the value of a dozen ordinary rebels. If necessary set the whole regiment to the work."

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," cried Rose in great apparent consternation, as she unseen unclasped a bracelet from her arm and flung it far over head into the shrubbery, "gentlemen, I've lost my bracelet—a valued bracelet. Five minutes ago I had it on my arm. Major Cleveland—Captain Arbald—I beseech you to search for it. What could have become of it?"

This outbreak arrested the departure of the young officers, who had started to execute the orders of their superiors.

"Gentlemen, I implore you to search for it. Major, it may have been dropped in the bower. Go look for it, sir. Captain Arbald and Lieutenant Marvin, why do you stand idly there? Do you refuse to search for my jewel? I've lost a bracelet, I tell you, sirs. Is this the way you attend upon the wishes of a lady?"

"Really, Miss Elsworth," broke in Cleveland, "duty——"

"Don't talk to me of duty, sir. I would not lose my bracelet for the wealth of the world. A valued token from a dear friend; I swore never to part with it. Oh, indeed, you are gallant gentlemen. You let me lose a precious jewel, and you stand staring by. I tell you I value that bracelet with my very life."

The gentleman stared. Rose certainly understood how to play the imperious woman. Her whole object was to gain time.

"But the escaped prisoner, Miss Elsworth," interceded Major Cleveland, who was not willing to lose the hold he fancied he possessed upon Rose by any act of opposition to her will, while at the same time he felt himself imperatively urged to secure the escaped rebel.

"What is the prisoner to me?" passionately exclaimed Rose, "what is he to my bracelet? Must I lose my bracelet for the sake of a runaway rebel—a miserable clown who may either hang or run, I care not. Some one will tread upon my bracelet;" walking up and down the path, peering and searching impetuously, and with feverish impatience; "one of the common soldiery will find and keep it. I would not lose it for worlds."

"Indeed, Miss Elsworth, I assure you——" interrupted Arbald.

"Oh, no assurances, sir," said Rose, turning upon the poor captain like a tigress; "where is your devotion to me? where your willingness to sacrifice everything for me, as I have heard you swear more than once? If you ever expect to come into my presence again, you must first clasp that bracelet on my arm. I will hear nothing, listen to no excuse, and if you refuse to obey me, never let me see you again."

Major Cleveland saw his great object in danger, and hastened to retrieve matters.

"Gentlemen," said he, "do you remain with Miss Elsworth, and search for the missing jewel. I will myself give the necessary order for the search for the missing prisoner." He lifted his hat to Rose, and walked away.

Rose immediately dispatched the young officers in different directions, and no sooner was she unobserved than she darted into the shrubbery in the direction she had seen Walter gliding away. He was nowhere to be seen. Had he escaped? The hope was so promising, that Rose's cheek glowed with delight. She hastened towards the outer limits of the garden nearest to the forest. In that direction, if in any, he must have effected his escape. To hor consternation, as she approached, she saw a strong guard posted there. The shrubbery here was dense, consisting of thickly tangled lilac bushes, snow balls, a few evergreens, and the like. In the midst of these bushes, thickly screened in front by dense spruces, the captain lay prostrate upon the ground. Through the bushes he saw Rose, and whispered her name. She heard it, and moving up to the bush, bent her head so as to listen, at the same time pretending to be otherwise engaged.

The light by this time had nearly faded out from the west, but there was a full moon, riding clearly and directly above their heads. The moonlight rendered the open walks almost as bright as day, but the shadows were dense and black.

"They are searching for me with torches, Rose," whispered Walter, "and will be sure to find me. Is there no opening by which I can glide through to the forest?"

Rose looked around. Not a chance seemed to offer.

"No, Walter," said she; "but I might get you to the house. There you could effect a disguise. We might steal along by the shadows to one of the windows."

"We must, at least, try it," was the reply. "I saw your bracelet trick, dear Rose, and found it for you before I crawled away. Why it is the very one I gave, and had a kiss for once."

"Hush!" muttered Rose; "be cautious, Walter, I implore you!"

Rose and Walter succeeded in getting to the shadowed side of the house unobserved; but between the screen-work of shrubbery through which they had forced their way, an open space was to be crossed—a space in shadow, to be sure, but dangerous and exposed nevertheless. After some consultation, they made an attempt to cross, but at an unfortunate moment. They had not run a dozen yards, before a whole party of soldiery with torches came rushing around the corner of the house—among them Major Cleveland. Walter turned and darted back, but he was seen, and a rush made in the direction he disappeared. Several shots were fired, and the clamor that arose was startling. The whole scene, indeed, was wild and picturesque. The flashing, red gleaming torches, lighting up the shadows, and falling with a strange contrast upon the peaceful, soft light of the moon—the figures darting in and out of the shrubbery—the fiery aspect of the foliage—the uncertainty and wild confusion attending the movements of the prisoner—the distant shout—all these things combined to render the scene strangely fascinating and thrilling.

Rose stood spell-bound, with palpitating heart, looking upon the scene. The power to move seemed to be suspended. Her cheek looked blenched even in the darkness in which she stood. Suddenly a voice fell upon her ear, close at her side. She started, and looked up. Major Cleveland's face was bending over her shoulder.

"What am I to think, Miss Elsworth?" said he, "I find you assisting at this fellow's escape."

"Think!" exclaimed Rose, vehemently, "that I would give the world for Captain Armstrong to escape."

"Humph! That would be a useless gift, Miss Elsworth. Look and see for yourself."

The major pointed to where the torches had congregated, and were swaying to and fro in the struggle of the capture. In a few moments more, a party of a dozen soldiers came crashing through the shrubbery, dragging the unfortunate Walter a prisoner in their midst.

"Great Heaven!" cried Rose, burying her face in her hands.

"How's this, Miss Elsworth?" whispered the major in her ear. She started, and stared at him proudly, with all her self-possession regained.

"I rejoice that we meet again," said Cleveland, lifting his hat with mock politeness to Walter, as the party came up. Walter shook off the hands that were upon him, and folded his arms in silent disdain. As he did so something glittering dropped upon the grass at his feet. A soldier picked it up, and stepped forward to present it to the major. As Cleveland received it he started with undisguised suprise. It was the very bracelet he had seen on Rose's arm, and the one she had lost, and for the discovery of which she was so clamorous. A light broke upon the major's mind. He began to divine matters. A torch was at his elbow. He held the jewel to the flame, and read the inscription—"*To Rose, from Walter.*" He smiled, although at heart greatly chagrined and enraged, and stepping up to Rose, extended the bracelet to her.

"I am glad, my dear Miss Elsworth, to be the means of restoring *this valued token from a dear friend.* Would it not be a strange vicissitude if the finding of the trinket should be the means of losing the friend?"

Rose violently compressed her lip, but did not reply. The major whispered an order, and Walter was led off to his former quarters. None remained but the officer and our heroine. Rose stood with tightly clasped hands her eyes following the cortege. Cleveland uttered her name in a low tone, when, starting from her reverie, she turned upon him fiercely:

"Major Cleveland, Captain Armstrong must be allowed to go free. I have your promise. I hold you to it. He must—he shall be free!"

"My promise, madam?"

"Look!" exclaimed she vehemently, holding up her hand and pointing to the ring he had given her in the bower.

"Aha! I was beginning to suspect the trick!"

"Your shrewdness would have done you more credit if you had detected it before. As it is, I have your signet and your promise to save Captain Armstrong!"

"But the promise referred only to your husband."

"Captain Armstrong is my betrothed husband."

"Aye, but at present is a prisoner. You see, madam, I hold the trump card."

"Your pardon, sir, but I have the game."

"Eh! Is not the captain in my hands?"

"Before to-morrow morning he shall be in mine."

"Confound it, madam," exclaimed the major, allowing his rage to escape, "I'll keep so strict a guard upon him, a fly shan't light upon him without my knowing of it."

"Do so, and if you were argus-eyed into the bargain, I'd marry him before to-morrow morning."

"Ha, is it come to that? I'll march this hour."

"It would be too late."

"This moment, then."

"I would anticipate you." Could any one have seen the blaze and flash in Rose's eyes during this scene, he would have remembered it to his dying moment. She was superb, beautiful, grand, in the full sway of her reckless, vehement purpose.

"Madam," exclaimed the major, astounded at what appeared her audacity, "you talk idly."

"Sir, you talk without reason."

"Why, madam, I'll go to him at once, put a pistol to his head, blow his brains out——"

"And make me his widow!"

"Deuce take it, you're mad!"

"Mad, if you will, Major Cleveland. It is" (darting at him), "a struggle between us. Look to it, sir. You may be bold, valorous, cunning—vastly so—but you have a woman's wit against you, so look to it."

"A challenge, Miss Elsworth?"

"A challenge, Major Cleveland!"

(To be continued.)

MY COUSIN LUCY.

My Cousin Lucy was a romp—a bold, dashing, beautiful, delightful tease of a romp, who gave me no peace—and made me the happiest mortal in the world. It was perfect torment and perfect happiness to be teased by Cousin Lucy. She was a fairy romp. There never was anything so light, and buoyant and graceful as Cousin Lucy; there never was such a laugh as hers—it was merriment set to music. You might be vexed sometimes; an angry word would rise to your lip perhaps—but one glance at the smile that lighted up her sweet lips—one glance at her merry, half-roguish, half-apologizing eyes, would send your vexation to the winds. It was exquisite pleasure to be near her. She came and went like a sunbeam. She brought light with her, and left a shadow behind when she was gone. It would have been cruelty to have checked the flow of her spirits. She could not have lived in a restrained atmosphere. Merriment, and laughter, and glee bubbled up from her breast—and if pressed down into her bosom, would have broken her heart. Everybody liked her. She teased everybody, tormented their lives out (so they said), but everybody continually talked about her, courted her, praised her, took delight in her. What a light, graceful thing she was! I do not believe the flowers felt the pressure of her feet, as she passed over them. Her pat, little, arched foot, would scarcely brush the dew from the leaf it touched. Her agility was wonderful. She would dart about you like the play of lightning, and defy your efforts to seize her. Her spring was like a fawn's. She would almost have crossed "a roaring flood on the unsteadfast footing of a spear"—if any footing could have been unsteadfast to her lightness and command of limb. And then her daring. No one ever ventured to swing so high as she did; nor to mount such mettlesome steeds; nor to clamber up such dangerous precipices; nor to do a thousand things at which other young ladies shrink and become terrified.

I confess that I loved my Cousin Lucy. I was not alone in this, but I fancied from the first that while she unmercifully ridiculed and tormented other of her admirers, with me there was a leaven of mercy—of tenderness, I could almost say. Indeed I shall never know happiness so complete and entire again, as those days spent with Cousin Lucy—when she was only Cousin Lucy. Now—well, no matter about *now*—then, she was a new and a rare flower, with the dew on, and every sense I possessed was fascinated. If I could only look upon her, I was happy; to close my eyes and listen to her, was enough; to touch her, to feel her hand in mine—sometimes even to kiss her hand—this was *too* much. Once, indeed, in the midst of a mad romp—for we were very children both, and gave our spirits holiday—I caught her in my arms and snatched one full, complete, round kiss! That kiss! It was a dozen years ago, but I have not forgotten its sweetness yet, although since then, the same lips have been fondly pressed to mine many, many times.

The fine sports we had in those times—that dozen years ago. Lucy was up to many a trick, bold, hoydenish some would call them—very *unlady-like* they undoubtedly were—but Cousin Lucy no more thought of being *lady-like*, than she did of being her grandmother. She would have laughed at any such idea with so rich, merry, and glorious a laugh, that the stiffest sticklers for the proprieties would have been half-converted to her view of the question. I recollect one of her tom-boy tricks—in which I was the victim—

a very naughty trick, so everybody said; but then everybody laughed heartily. We had been in high glee all that day—had tormented and teased each other in every conceivable way, but all with so much real enjoyment that even the gravest member of the family did not attempt to check our spirits. At last, I hardly know how it began, I was playfully attempting to retort upon her for something done, by sprinkling her face with a few drops of cool spring water I had in the hollow of my hand. I succeeded, but only to receive in return a much larger quantity. The game was open, and I received a shower at every turn. I was thoroughly ducked—drowned—in fact, became a sort of walking cataract. The mischievous witch began by dowsing me with a dipperful—and ended by pailfuls. In vain did I attempt to approach her with a view of punishment. She darted around me like a sprite. It was splash, splash—blinded, bewildered, gasping, dripping, saturated, I could only make ineffectual attempts to escape her, or retort upon her. To retort upon her! She was a Napoleon—everywhere at the same moment—pouncing down upon me from unexpected quarters—appearing and disappearing with the rapidity of flashes of lightning. Did I crawl around the corner of the house to come upon her unawares—just as I thought her capture secure—splash came a bucketful over my head from behind? There was no taking her unprepared, and there was no being prepared for her. My own feelings were those of a drowning rat—as near as I can imagine the feelings of a drowning rat to be. It ended as all our sports ended. I was thoroughly conquered—and she without a thread wet. It was all very childish and very ridiculous—a practical joke, and practical jokes are under ban; but nevertheless I like childish and ridiculous things—and a good practical joke sometimes.

Never shall I forget how heartily the laugh was turned against me upon another occasion. I had vowed that I would have a kiss from Cousin Lucy, and Cousin Lucy had dared me to the attempt. I accepted the challenge, and darted at her. She eluded my spring, and then began the chase. It was in the evening. Up and down stairs, in and out of rooms, with doublings and turnings, and stratagems and manœuvres. The chase was a spirited one. More than once I had my hands upon her, but she glided from my grasp as if she had been a sunbeam. At last, I was close behind her, and there was only one turning by which she could escape. It was in the hall, and it was dark. She turned an angle, whence a flight of stairs descended, and, as she did so, I sprang upon and seized her, as I thought. She struggled in my arms, shaking with suppressed laughter. I bent down to seize the kiss, fairly won as I supposed, when a light suddenly flashed up from the foot of the stairs, and a peal of laughter rang through the house. There, below, was my Cousin Lucy with a light held above her head, her finger pointed at me, and the most provoking expression upon her face. I looked at the figure I so tightly held in my embrace, and I dropped it suddenly. I had been vigorously embracing the kitchen wench, instead of Cousin Lucy. I looked at the red-armed Bridget, who was cramming her apron in her mouth as if to stopple up her laughter; I looked at Lucy laughing so triumphantly below; I looked at half a dozen other faces, attracted to the spot by my discomfiture; and I bolted, ran, out of sight and out of hearing.

It was getting really necessary that I should do something heroic in the sight of my Cousin Lucy. I had been her victim and laughing-stock too much. She would grow to despise me—so I feared. I wanted to conquer somebody or something. I felt quite Quixotish—chivalrous, heroic, and so forth. Some adventure or hairbreath escape I quite panted for. An accident unexpectedly did it all for me. There was a little stream we often sailed upon, with a beautiful, little wooded island in its centre. The trees upon this island in one place, interlaced in a perfect arch with those of the opposite bank. It occurred to me one day, and I proposed it at once to Lucy, that I should climb the trees, clamber along the arching boughs, and descend on the opposite side. There was enough danger in the adventure to give it zest. I was surprised to hear Lucy oppose it. Nothing ever seemed to give her fear for herself; why should she tremble, as she evidently did, at the trifling thing I was proposing? She told me afterwards that she was seized with an unaccountable apprehension—a sort of presentiment, I suppose.

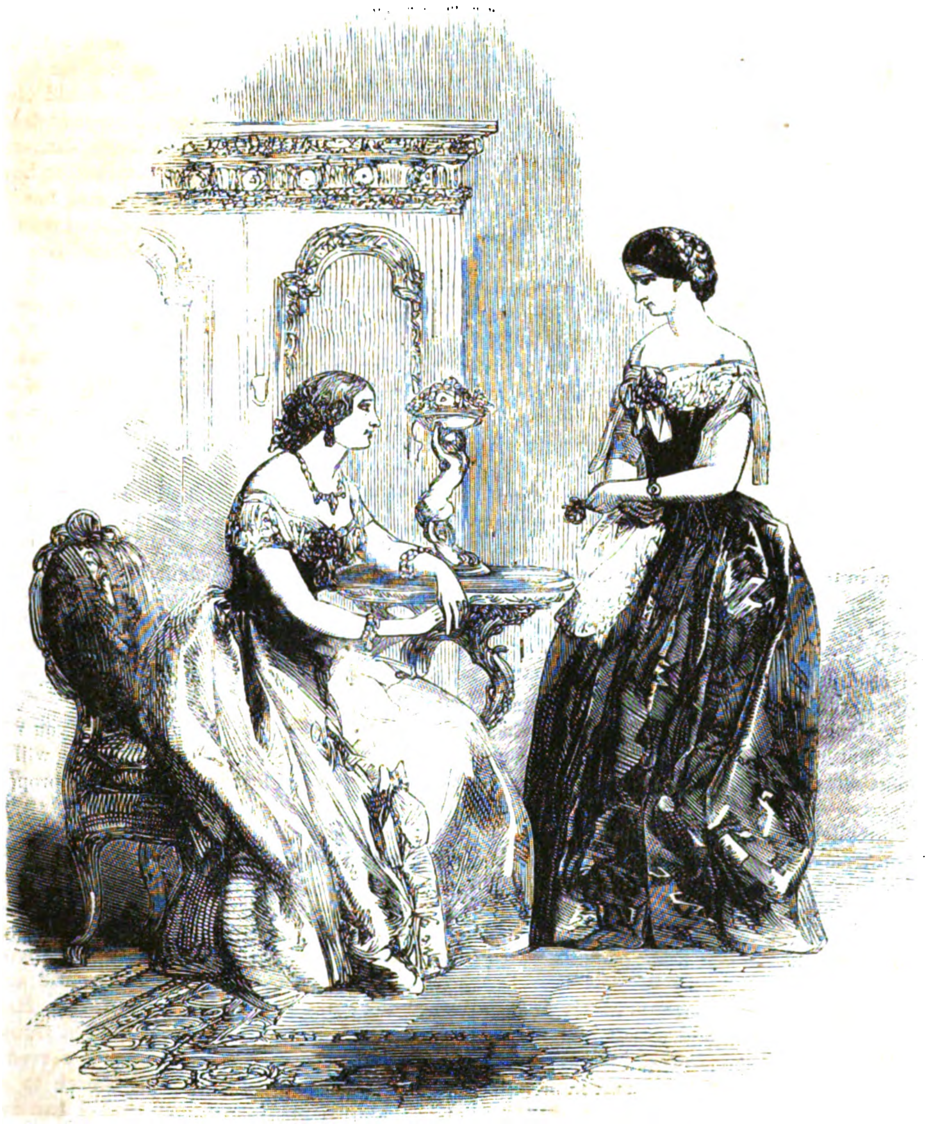
The ascent was easy enough, and I was just about to pass from the tree I had ascended to the branch of an elm, and from this to an oak by which I could descend, and was exulting over the success of my feat, when, as I threw my weight upon the bough, it snapped, bent, and I was suddenly sent swinging through the air at a height of forty feet. At the same instant, I heard Lucy scream, and giving a hasty glance downward, saw her sinking upon the ground. The branch upon which I was suspended had partially broken at a joint, and was held by what appeared to me no more than its mere bark. I had slipped down the full length of the pendent branch, and my only hold was by my hands. The position was one that could not be retained many moments, even if the broken bough had strength enough to sustain me. My muscles and sinews soon grew swollen and strained. My strength was gradually escaping from my limbs. I felt that my hour was come. The river was shallow beneath me, and its bed rocky. If I fell, I should be dashed to pieces, and to climb up the branch seemed impossible, when the least strain threatened to snap it entirely off, and send me plunging through the air. I closed my eyes, and tried to think of death. My position had become so painful, that I tried to gain sufficient resolution to loosen my hold, and so at once end my suspense and agony. I looked down to take my last look of Lucy. Her hands were clasped, and her pale face gleamed through her dishevelled tresses. The sight of her nerved me to exertion. I looked up along the branch to which I clung. It was evidently firmer than I had first supposed. It was possible that I could draw myself up. The hope gave me courage. I began cautiously to ascend. Incessant practice in a gymnasium had given me experience in this mode of climbing, and desperation gave me unnatural strength and power of endurance. I gained confidence as I proceeded. The limb surged and swayed with my exertions, as if every instant its frail limb would sever, but it held out so long that I began to look upon myself as past danger. At last I could clasp my knees to the limb, and, in a few moments more, reached and threw myself upon another branch—safe!

I could see that Lucy had fainted—so I rapidly descended and flew to her side. A little water restored her—and she began to laugh and weep alternately. We went home together, with my arm around her waist. She was silent and different from what I had ever seen her before.

Somehow, Lucy was not the same to me after this event. She stopped teasing me. Had she grown afraid of me? Scarcely, for we took long walks together, grew mutually fond of moonlight (what more significant sign?) and read the poets together.

I wound my arms around her waist one day, and looked down into her eyes. "Lucy," said I, "shall it be so?"

Lucy knew what I meant, if the reader does not. Lucy said that it might be: and so I have another name for Cousin Lucy now.



A CARNIVAL ADVENTURE IN MILAN

The following story, though imbued with an air of romance which may seem to impart to it the character of fiction, is nevertheless (at least in all its main points), strictly true. The incidents occurred nearly as they are here narrated, and the persons who took part in them lived and moved and had their being, not many years ago, in the gay circles of continental society. It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to mention that the names of those persons are not identical with the designations of the individuals who figure in the scenes here described.

It was Carnival time in Milan, evening was approaching, and the noisy gaiety of the day, had given place to a brief interval of comparative quietude. The more humble class of idlers, who had been perambulating the streets since early dawn, were wearily sauntering homeward; whilst the more fashionable votaries of pleasure were regaling themselves in the *restaurants*, or preparing for the revels of the approaching night.

The Cathedral clock had just struck six, and in the second story of a house in the most elegant quarter of the city, a lady was seated at her toilette. This lady, a beautiful Italian brunette of about four and twenty, was familiarly chatting and laughing with a female attendant. Suddenly her merriment subsided, and she looked thoughtful and serious. Then, after a brief pause, she said, in a somewhat petulant tone—

"But, after all, this is really very annoying—it is most unreasonable to require me to make my *début* thus unexpectedly to-night. It was fully understood that I should not appear till next Tuesday. I am by no means well, and I feel myself getting quite hoarse. I would never have gone to the masquerade last night, had I been aware I was to appear so soon. It strikes me there is some treachery at work. Possibly an artful design for cancelling my engagement, if I plead the excuse of illness. And here have I been studying my part six hours a day for the last month—it is too bad!"

After this outpouring of complaint, the Signora stopped short: she seemed as if apprehensive of having impaired the energy of her lungs by over-talking; for she presently began to try the power of her voice in a difficult *roulade*. The silence which succeeded this vocal exercise was, in a few seconds, again interrupted, and the lady, breaking into a fit of laughter, said to her maid,

"Zerbina! a droll idea has just crossed my mind. Suppose I were to run away—to leave Milan this instant, and set off to Naples, without appearing at La Scala. What an excellent carnival joke that would be, and what a dilemma our poor *impresario* would be thrown into!"

"Signora!" replied the attendant, in a tone of respectful remonstrance, "no doubt the joke would be good enough, if it were practicable; but, unluckily, it is not so. You seem to forget that were you to attempt to leave Milan, the police would immediately be on your track, and you would be brought back again under an escort of *Sbirri*."

"Very true, Zerbina—there is no help for it; so, well or ill, I suppose I *must* sing *la Mascherata* to-night!"

So saying, the fair *cantatrice* rose from her chair, and standing before her looking-glass, proceeded to give the finishing touch to the arrangement of her hair. Whilst she was thus engaged, a ring at the bell announced the arrival of a visitor.

"Who can that be?" she exclaimed. "Recollect, Zerbina, I am not at home to any one— except—."

A look of intelligence from the waiting maid denoted that she perfectly understood to whom the exception applied; so, without staying for further instructions, Zerbina hurried out of the room. She speedily re-appeared, saying—

"Signora, it is a lady—most elegantly dressed! A lady of rank, I am quite sure. I told her you could not see any one; but she will take no denial. She insists on speaking with you for a few moments in private, on a matter of great importance."

"What can she have to say? And at this time! But no matter—you must show her in, if, as you say, she will take no denial."

The stranger entered, and the Signora found herself in the presence of a lady of surpassing beauty, whose manner and deportment, though stamped with the dignity and elegance of high life, were somwhat *outré* and eccentric.

"Have I the honor to address Signora Antonina?" inquired she.

"That is my name, Madame," replied the *prima donna*, with a profound courtsey.

"You are, I believe, the new soprano from Venice, and you are to appear at La Scala to-night, in the opera of *La Mascherata*."

"Alas! yes, Madame," answered Antonina, with a sigh.

"Pardon my curiosity, if I inquire why you reply in so melancholy a tone?"

"Allow me, Madame, in my turn, to inquire to what I am indebted for the honor of exciting so much of your interest?"

"I will," resumed the lady, "briefly explain the object of my visit;" and seating herself upon the sofa, she motioned Antonina to take her place beside her. "Signora, I have a strange communication to make, and a singular favor to solicit."

"You forget, Madame," observed Antonina, reservedly, "that we are utter strangers to each other, and that I have not yet the honor of knowing even your name."

"Pardon me," said the stranger; "if you will grant me your attention for a few moments, you will perceive my *incognita* is the first condition of the proposal I am about to make."

"*Incognita!*" exclaimed Antonina, surprised and disappointed; but, without heeding the interruption, her visitor thus proceeded:—

"I am a person of fortune and of noble birth; and though not insensible to the advantages which wealth and rank confer, yet I feel that I should have been far happier in a more humble and totally different position of life. Fate has assigned to you and me our respective parts. You act yours on the mimic scene, and I play mine on the stage of real life. Now, it has occurred to me that we might perhaps exchange characters, and play each other's part with mutual advantage. Possibly the station I occupy in society might be more adequately filled by you; and it may happen that I am better fitted than yourself for the career of public life which fortune has assigned to you. You appear to be pre-eminently endowed with self-command, and your countenance indicates that easy pliancy of disposition which readily accommodates itself to circumstances. I, on the contrary, have been throughout life the victim of enthusiastic and ardent feeling. A flighty imagination continually disposes me to break through the barriers of my rank, and to wander into the regions of romance and adventure. My passion for music and for the drama has inspired me with a strong desire to appear on the stage—a course to which my family connections naturally present obstacles. Now, dear Signora Antonina, it is in your power to assist in gratifying my long-cherished wish, and thereby to confer on me a favor, for which, be assured, you shall not find me ungrateful. All I ask of you is, that you will allow me to play your part in the opera to-night."

"My part in the opera!" repeated Antonina, with amazement. "My part at La Scala! Do I understand you rightly, Madame?"

"Perfectly. My request is, that instead of making your *début* to-night, you will afford me the opportunity of making mine."

Antonina, almost bewildered with astonishment, stammered out the words—

"Pardon me, Madame—you are jesting, I presume—but I am at a loss to comprehend the motive."

"I am not jesting," answered the stranger emphatically, and with great excitement of manner. "I am quite serious; though possibly you cannot understand the whim—the mania, if you choose to call it so—that possesses me. During the last seven years, I have been the reigning queen of fashion in the gayest cities of Europe, where I have enjoyed every amusement which society can offer, and every triumph which vanity can desire. At length I have become weary alike of the gratifications and annoyances of my much-envied position. But there is one pleasure—one triumph—to which I am yet a stranger, and for which my spirit yearns. I feel an ungovernable desire to share the excitement and the glory which attend a heroine of the operatic stage! You smile, Signora;—but had I been born in a sphere less elevated than that which fate has assigned to me, the profession to which you belong would have been my vocation; and, what is more, I feel within the sort of energy and inspiration which would have enabled me to subdue triumphantly the countless difficulties which attend such a career."

"Madame," coolly answered Antonina, after a short pause, "I fully understand and appreciate your enthusiasm for the art to which I myself am ardently devoted. But do not be offended if I observe that enthusiasm, though a most desirable quality, is not the only one requisite to insure success. In spite of all your earnest feelings and enthusiastic confidence, I am disposed to think that the realisation of your wish is utterly impossible."

"The impossibility rests solely on your refusal," exclaimed the stranger with increased energy. "Signora Antonina, if you will accede to my request, there is no sacrifice I will not readily make to requite you. I declare to you sincerely, that for two hours of your existence I would willing surrender all the advantages of mine."

"I have no inclination to avail myself of any such sacrifice," replied the Signora proudly. "I am devoted to my profession, and am quite content to live and die a *prima donna*. But with regard to this evening's performance, to confess the truth, I am not particularly desirous of making my first courtsey to a Milanese audience to-night. I am somewhat indisposed, and my voice is not in such good condition as I could desire on the occasion of a *début*. In short, I have several good reasons for wishing that some one else could be found to play the part for me."

"Then the point is settled," exclaimed the lady, exultingly rising from her seat.

Antonina smiled at the self-confidence of her visitor, who was, to all appearance, perfectly insensible to the difficulties of the task she was so anxious to undertake. The *prima donna* therefore expected to create no little embarrassment when she asked the stage-struck heroine whether she had bestowed any time on the study of the part she wished to appear in.

Without making any reply, the lady took her seat at the piano, and after trying some passages in two or three different keys, sang with a clear powerful voice, faultless intonation and finished execution, an exceedingly difficult scena from *La Mascherata*.

"*Dio vero!*" exclaimed the astonished Antonina. "What an organ! what flexibility! what style! How did you learn to sing this difficult music in such perfection? For myself, I have been studying the part laboriously for months, and yet I have never succeeded in getting quite smoothly through the passage which you have just performed with such perfect ease and accuracy."

"Well, you are now satisfied that I *can* sing," said the lady, rising from the piano with a self-complacent air: "and I do not hesitate to say that I can go through the whole part, from beginning to end, without a failure. You may rest assured that the success of the opera will not be marred by my performance."

Antonina was silent, and could almost have persuaded herself that what she had heard was the mere illusion of a dream.

"During the last three weeks," continued the lady, "that is to say, ever since the *Mascherata* has been announced at La Scala, I have practised the principal part several times every day. The object of this unremitting assiduity was to realise my wish of appearing on the stage. In the practice of the trios and concerted pieces, I have been assisted by several of my friends, amateurs like myself. Even the choruses have not been left untried. In short, I have had the most labored rehearsals under the semblance of musical *soirées*. The result is, I am thoroughly prepared to present myself to the public, if you will give me leave to be your substitute to-night. My scheme has not been arranged without forethought, and I have not chosen La Scala, and the *Mascherata* for my *début* without due consideration. This being my first visit to Milan, I am less known here than in any other capital of Europe, and the *Mascherata* being a

Carnival piece, I shall have the advantage of performing in a demi-mask. I shall be required to unmask only for a moment in the last scene; and it will be very extraordinary, if, during that short moment, any one should recognize me. However, I will boldly run the risk, for few things are more improbable than the chance of my being discovered. As I am obliged to leave Milan in a day or two, I must resign the part to you on the second night of performance; and when we hear it remarked (as doubtless we shall), that Antonina sang much better on the second night than on the first, you and I may laugh in our sleeves at the simplicity of the manager and the public. In personal appearance, it is true, we are in some respects dissimilar: for instance, my hair is much lighter than yours,—I have blue, and you dark eyes; but such little differences are scarcely discernible on the stage. On the other hand, we are as nearly as possible of equal height, and our figures are similar; your dresses will fit me accurately enough, and as to complexion and features, stage illusion will doubtless sufficiently account for them."

Antonina, who was naturally of a playful disposition, and ever ready to enter into a joke, yielded to these arguments, and finally consented to gratify the wish of her eccentric visitor, whom she forthwith assisted to dress for the character.

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Next morning nothing was talked of in Milan but the brilliant *début* of Signora Antonina. Never had so fine a voice been heard within the walls of La Scala—never had so charming an actress trod the stage. Whilst her features were concealed by the mask, every note that flowed from her mellifluous voice elicited admiration and applause; but when, in the last scene, she raised her mask, and the charms of beauty were added to the attractions of talent, the whole audience rose with one accord, and a shower of *bouquets* descended at the feet of the *prima donna*. . . . . . As soon as the curtain dropped, a crowd of gentlemen had rushed to her box: but to their great surprise and regret they were informed that she had suddenly quitted the theatre. However, this modest withdrawal from public notice had served only to increase the enthusiasm of her admirers. Serenades had been performed beneath her windows until a late hour of the night; and not a few fierce wrangles had taken place in the cafés among very young gentlemen who had fallen desperately in love at first sight with the new divinity.

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Whilst the whole city was agitated by these exciting events, a scene of another kind was taking place in the boudoir of Signora Antonina. She was reclining on a sofa, weeping bitterly, and beside her sat the triumphant *debutante* of the preceding night, vainly endeavoring to console her.

"How inconsiderate was I," exclaimed Antonina, "to consent to this deception—and how cruel in you to tempt me to it! Your vanity and folly have ruined all my future prospects. I cannot now venture to appear in Milan. I should only be laughed at—perhaps, even hissed off the stage. But, wherever I go, the recollection of your triumph will pursue me, and paralyse all my efforts! Alas! what misfortunes have I brought upon myself by my folly!"

Whilst she who was undesignedly the cause of all this distress, was vainly endeavoring to assuage it, Zerbina entered the room, having in her hand several letters, which she presented to her mistress. Antonina, perused two or three of the missives, which contained declarations of love couched in the most impassioned terms;—then, throwing them into the lap of her companion, she said, in a tone of affected indifference which ill disguised her mortification, "There, madame, it is but just that you should enjoy all your triumphs! Accept the homage addressed to you under my name!"

The lady began to read one of the letters. Whilst perusing it, a smile of satisfaction lighted up her countenance, and she exclaimed joyfully: "Dear Antonina, dry up your tears. There is an epistle which affords me an opportunity of making atonement for all the uneasiness I have innocently caused you. Now you may take your revenge!"

"My revenge," said the *prima donna* eagerly seizing the billet, from which she read aloud the following lines:

"'Divine Antonina—Your lovely image haunts my thoughts. The tones of your enchanting voice incessantly vibrate through my heart! If you will vouchsafe to accept my hand, and to share my rank and fortune, step into the carriage which will this evening be waiting at the door of your residence, and repair to the Court of Berlin with your admiring humble servant,

"'BARON VON REICHSBERG.'"

"How often misfortune proves the forerunner of good luck," said the lady. "Just now, Signora, you were blaming me for having blighted your fair prospects. But the proposal conveyed in this note, which I gladly transfer to you, makes ample atonement for any injury you may imagine I caused you in your professional capacity. Hesitate not to accept the hand of the Baron, whom I know to be a man of high character. He is at present engaged in some diplomatic capacity in the service of his sovereign the King of Prussia. He possesses an ample fortune, and I feel convinced that he is in all respects calculated to ensure your future happiness. He, it cannot be doubted, will have good reason to congratulate himself on becoming the husband of the real, instead of the pretended Antonina. Hold yourself in readiness, therefore, to join the Baron at the time appointed: and should he chance to remark any difference between you and the *Mascherata*, remember that it is perfectly natural and easy to account for it by the effect of *stage illusion*."

With these words the unknown lady hastily bade adieu to Antonina, who, fully consoled for her recent mortification, joyfully began to prepare for her journey to Berlin.

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The second performance of the *Mascherata*, which had been announced for the following evening, was unavoidably postponed. The doors of La Scala were closed; the *impresario* having received the mortifying intelligence that his *prima donna* had eloped with a German baron.

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In the following winter, two distinguished beauties engrossed general admiration in the fashionable *salons* of Paris. One was the Baroness Antonina Von Reichsberg, and the other was the accomplished Marquise de C——. One evening when these ladies met unexpectedly at a splendid party in the Faubourg Saint Germain, they both started with astonishment; and presently the Marquise, whilst whispering a few words of congratulation in the ear of the Baroness, glanced significantly at the portly German diplomatist by whom she was escorted. After the ladies had enchanted the company by their exquisite singing of the grand duo from *Norma*, the Baroness drew her friend aside, and briefly described her journey from Milan to Berlin, in the course of which she succeeded in convincing Baron Von Reichsberg how completely *stage illusion* may mislead both the eyes and ears.

Before they parted, the ladies reciprocally promised inviolable secrecy respecting the events which had occurred at Milan. The Marquise probably kept her vow, but it appears the Baroness Von Reichsberg was not equally discreet; for her disclosures have been quoted as a guarantee for the truth of the facts above narrated.

THE BLACK MADONNA.

A LEGEND.

When one goes to Chartres, or rather, when one passes that place, after having traversed the monotonous and vast plains of Beauce, it may happen, that to enliven your spirits, you have to await for three hours the diligence which should meet the one by which you came from Paris. Railways will soon put an end to this nuisance, but at present, should it happen, and if, in the midst of the bad temper which the above announcement (made with the coolest possible manner by the superintendent of the *Messageries*) is sure to throw you, you should stamp and turn round, and, in so doing, catch a glimpse through the trees of the two clock-towers of the cathedral, I congratulate you. That glimpse will repay the waiting, and the ill-temper.

I am going to tell a story—not to give any description of the cathedral. But, in addition to its architecture, and to the extraordinary length of nave, it also possesses, more than any church which I have seen, that quality which inspires at once a feeling of mysticism and of ardent devotion. The building, which is so pierced and fretted that it admits light like a piece of lace-work, is remarkable for the beauty, the size, and the painted glass of its windows; for the carving which surrounds the nave; and for its mosaic pavement, the windings of which are such that they can be traced by the devout for many a mile without going out of the cathedral—a pilgrimage which is often performed, and to which are attached certain indulgences. But that which I have more immediately to speak of is, that there is a chapel in the cathedral, wherein, night and day, waxen lights are burning before the figure of a *Black Madonna*, richly clothed, and sparkling with precious stones. She is called our "Lady of Miracles," and the ornaments with which she is adorned are each a testimony of gratitude from those who have had recourse to her intercession.

Many years ago, there lived at Chartres a young widow, who, rejecting all offers of a second match, devoted the remainder of her youth and beauty to a son, upon whom also rested all that love which she once bore to her husband. The careful tending of his mother, and indeed Nature herself, had made this boy the envy of other mothers, and the pride of his own; and he was, indeed, an object of love and envy. Healthful, well-made, and handsome, and of a tender and noble physiognomy which seemed to promise both goodness and greatness for the future.

Among other qualities with which this boy was endowed, was a voice as pure and angelic as ever had been heard; and his mother taught him some sacred songs, breathing forth love and filial affection, which, when he sang them, used, from their very sweetness, to draw tears, not only from the eyes of his mother, but also from those of the few friends who remained to her.

So it happened that when the month of August came round, the Bishop of Chartres himself, who had heard of the fame of this little fellow's singing, came to ask the widow to let her son sing at the most solemn feast of the Virgin, and the good bishop said, that his beauty, the openness of his countenance, the sweetness and goodness of his nature, and the sweet purity of his voice, in which he so nearly approached the angels, could not but be pleasing to the Virgin herself, and could not fail to touch the hearts of the children, and the mothers who would assist at the fête.

On the day of the Assumption, therefore, the widow having granted the request, forgot for awhile the seclusion she had lived in; laid aside her mourning, which she had ever worn since her husband died, and almost reassumed the airs of a young and pretty woman, as she prepared herself and her son for the ceremony.

After the procession had stopped before the altar of the Virgin, and whilst the nave was filled with the solemn pealing of the organ, the choir children ceased for a moment from casting flowers upon the altar, and the widow's son, clothed in a white tunic, with his long hair falling on his shoulders, bound round with a blue fillet, advanced from the midst of a crowd of boys of his own age. He knelt before the altar of the Virgin, and then raised his fine blue eyes, sparkling with emotion, to the shrine. Then it was, when the congregation scarcely breathed, and all were silent in holy expec tation, that the pure, solemn, angel voice of the boy broke forth:

"Regina cœli, lætare, alleluja,
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluja!"

His mother, hearing the voice of her boy, wept in happiness, and when he came to the end of the hymn,

"Gaudere et lætare, O Virgo Maria!"

the choir children cast upon him the roses which they had in their baskets, and covered him with a perfumed cloud; but when that cloud had disappeared, there was nothing beneath the flowers—the boy had vanished!

Notwithstanding every effort was made, it was impossible to find him. His mother and her friends traversed the town; the magistrates searched everywhere, but without success. The poor widow then refused to see any one; she passed her days in kneeling down and praying upon the pavement where she had last seen her son, and her nights in weeping, or in dreaming, when sleep had closed her eyes, that she saw her little boy amidst the rosy clouds of heaven, singing in the midst of the choir of angels.

Misfortune often follows misfortune, as constantly as the waves break upon the shore—so it was with the widow. The family of her husband, having never consented to his marriage, sued her for all the property which she held, as executrix of her husband's estate, for her son, and, after a tedious law-suit, she was completely ruined. The poor creature paid but little attention to this; her whole heart and affection had gone with her husband and son, and she heeded nothing upon earth. She lived poorly upon the sale of some jewels which remained to her, and never missed a day but she went and prayed before the altar of the Virgin.

In a short time her stock was exhausted, and she had nothing to live upon. She applied to the relations of her husband, but they answered her with scorn and with reproaches; and, of all her property, there now only remained the portraits of her husband and son, but she would have parted with life rather than have sold them. She at last dragged herself to the cathedral, and there knelt down upon the pavement and commenced her prayers, hoping that her hunger—for she had eaten nothing for two days—might kill her, and that she might from that spot be united to her son.

In spite of herself, of her cares, and her sorrows, she was attracted by the bustle and preparations which were going on in the church. They were decorating it with green branches and flowers, and they dressed, with unusual attention, the altar of the Virgin. It was the day of the Assumption—the anniversary of that upon which she had lost her son. She blessed heaven that she was about to die upon the self-same day—and then she knelt down in a corner and covered her head with her widow's veil.

Some persons in the cathedral recognized her, but dare not disturb her pious devotion; they, therefore, only talked quietly to each other about her misfortune, and about the rumor which accused the relations of her husband of having made away with the boy, so that they might gain his fortune.

The ceremony commenced. The poor widow ceased to weep, but with an inexpressible joy, she felt herself grow fainter and fainter as it proceeded.

The procession was formed as before; then it stopped before the chapel of the Virgin; then the organ filled the whole church with a celestial harmony; clouds of incense floated upwards, and flowers covered the mosaic pavement of the church. There was a moment of silence, during which the sighs of the poor widow could be heard.

All eyes were turned towards her, and they saw her dying, pale, poverty-stricken, and in rags, whom but a year before they had seen so beautiful and so happy. Suddenly, in the midst of the silence, a voice broke forth, pure and clear, like that of an angel, which sang

"Regina cœli, lætare, alleluja,
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluja.
Resurrexit, sicut dixit, alleluja."

The widow fell to the ground fainting, and all near her knelt down, weeping—for the angel which sang was none other than her little boy, her son, who, clothed in his white tunic, with his fair hair falling upon his shoulders, bound round his forehead with the blue fillet, stood upon the very stone whence he had disappeared.

The mother crept on her knees to him, and held him with all her strength, fearing that he would again vanish. The children of the choir covered both mother and child with a shower of roses; and, in the midst of the assembly, the bishop, applying to the widow the words of the hymn which the boy had sung to the Virgin, said, in a loud and solemn voice:

"O rejoice!
For him thou borest in thy bosom lives
And is arisen!"

The organ then again pealed forth, and never did so numerous a congregation pray with so much fervor and faith!

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The widow's son related what had occurred to him, as a dream which had left few traces in his mind. He remembered only the countenance of a female, more beautiful in his eyes than even his mother, although her face was *black*, who had nourished him with a delicious honey; and also that he had mingled his voice with a choir more harmonious and divine than those of earth.

So the story is, that when they dug beneath the stone whence the little chorister had vanished, they found that which now adorns the cathedral—the statue of the "BLACK MADONNA!"

A DRY DISSERTATION ON A WET DAY.

It was a rainy, an unmistakably rainy day: that sort of dull, dogged, determined downfall that drowns hope at once, most ignobly, in a gutter—yes, drowns her, beyond hot bricks and bellows. You cannot warm her back to life—you cannot blow new breath into her lungs: you feel gloomy, heavy, unspeakably stupid. If the soul was a spark, as some bards have denominated her, she is in danger of being extinguished altogether; for your spirits are most unquestionably damped. You envy the very roof of the house: there are spouts to carry off the abounding fluid, but none to relieve your overcharged mind. There the rain seems accumulating still—one grey, leaden, watery deluge. In parts of the tropics, when it rains—though sooth to say the rain is still heavier there when it does fall—there is something rather animating, rather exciting, and exhilarating in the scene. The water comes down with a rush and a roar that startles you; it is a cataract from the very clouds; the noise is almost like the noise of the sea; it is grand and wonderful—a stirring, restless, stormy, noisy, agitated scene! But here, the steady, sapping rain has so dismal a slowness, so chilly a dullness: it is such a respectable rain! so safe-going and well-conducted! it would never wash you off your horse (it washed a poor lady off her mule at Panama) or out of your gig—not it (which a tropical rain would be very apt to do). It would content itself by giving you plenty of rheumatism, and your death of cold! Aye, it might wash you into your coffin! but all fair and smoothly, drop, drop, drop—pretty fast, too, but steadily, always very steadily—persevering, quiet, taking hold of the day, and keeping hold with a sort of bull-dog pertinacity.

The country-inn that I am in seems half becoming an ark, and floating on the bosom of the waters! The land we live in seems melting from us, to one entire sop! Heigh-ho! patter, patter, splash, splash! If there are any shower-bath makers in this neighborhood, perhaps they are more to be pitied than I am. They must see utter ruin staring them in the face; for shower-sick must every body be for twenty years to come at least—so at any rate I should say, from my present feelings.

How abominably happy those unsympathizing, unfeeling ducks look! How can we use their ugly name as a term of endearment! Dear little duck, indeed!—malevolent monsters! With what wicked enjoyment they waddle and splash, there, just before my eyes, as though to say, "You tyrants, who slaughter us unmercifully full often, see how all-compensating Nature makes us happy when you are wretched! Next time you eat duck and green peas, remember this; and don't boast of your superiority too much; A puddle can make us happier than a principality makes some of you. Quack! quack!"

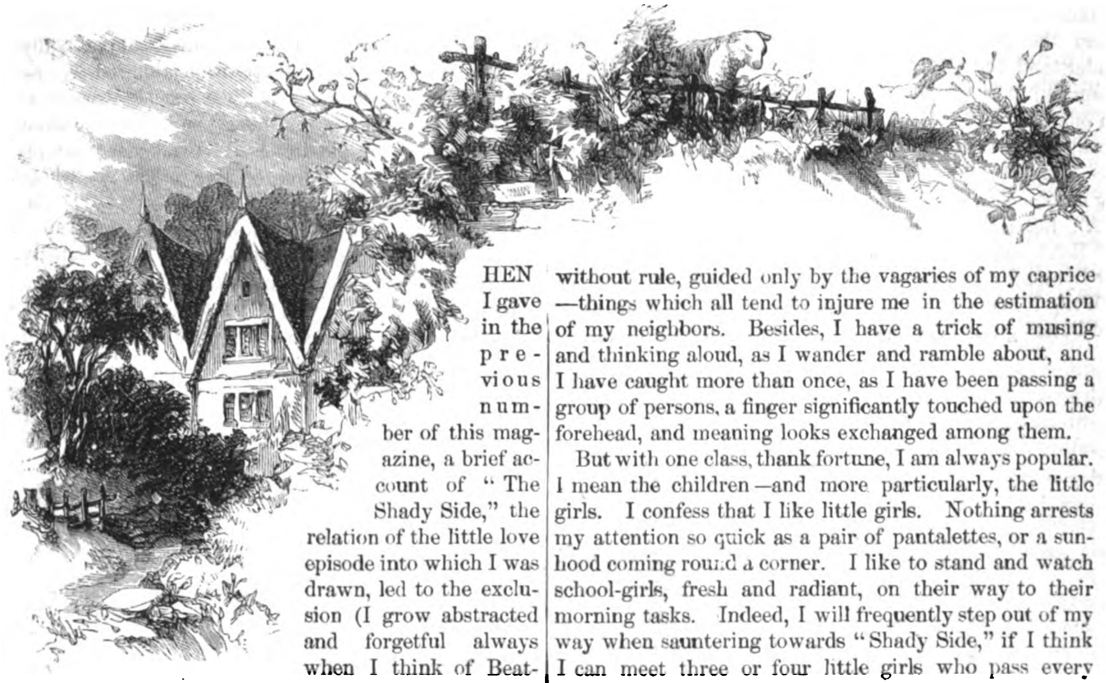
I must move from the windows; the sight of that ecstatic duck, yonder, is too much for me; my philosophy is in an inverse ratio to duck felicity. Hideous, hateful things, I would sooner call a pet child or a pet dog my screech-owl, or my sweet little alligator, than my duck, in future: stay, there seems a more sober and quiet one—for really some of them seem to become intoxicated on water! indeed, who knows but the fumes of the thousands of public houses, in our not over-sober country, may ascend faintly to the clouds, and thence faintly descend again, and slightly alcoholize this rain-water, quite enough to puzzle and perturb the brain of ducklings? He appears to compassionate the miserable, featherless biped, man, without webbed feet.

While gazing on that happy party, I had felt how flattered they would have been, had they known our term for such a bathing as they were enjoying was a ducking! I left the window, and took up a newspaper lying on the table. My eye is caught by the pathetic announcement that bobbin-net is dull. Poor bobbin-net! "Mule-twist is languid; potatoes are looking up" (probably that species called the pink-eyes); "jaconets are depressed!" I feel for them from the very bottom of my heart! But what is this? "Flour is lively!" Ah! I groan inwardly, and envy flour savagely. I read no more: I care not, in this melancholy mood, for the information that pigs has riz, or mangel-wurzel fallen; no fall can affect me now; nothing but a fall in the barometer.. Fate seems to have resigned her shears for that redoubtable instrument; in fact, empires, dynasties, constitutions, and institutions might depend on this same barometer. Imagine such a rain as this at Paris! Our volatile friends would not, probably, recover their spirits under half-a-dozen of revolutions at least. The first two or three might flash in the pan, their powder would be so damp.

One more saunter to the window, resolved to ignore the ducks, and be deaf to the exulting voice of quackery. Behold, a fly or chaise from the neighboring station has stopped at the door! I gaze on dissolving views of two nondescript creatures, that were once horses, and that now look like the damp remains of prodigious rats. If ever they had any fiery spirit of their own, after all this watering, it is assuredly only half-and-half now, and very strong of the water it must be! They look as if they would drop, and do drop too, not in the common sense of the term; but the rain is pouring off them and on them in showers. Flowing manes, indeed, and streaming tails! What weather! In our Anglo-Saxon tongue, weather seems almost to hint "wetter!" Only take out the *h*, and in Germany you have pretty nearly that horrible word itself!

Such discontented reflections arise in the mind, when everything is seen through a rainy medium; and then, your vexation can find no natural vent in tears in this case; no, indeed, 'tis too much water already! Might not another drop make the cup overflow, and set us all to swimming? In this damp atmosphere, too, could we ever dry our tears again? We might go weeping about like a willow, or the crying philosopher!

MY RURAL DOINGS.



WHEN I gave in the previous number of this magazine, a brief account of "The Shady Side," the relation of the little love episode into which I was drawn, led to the exclusion (I grow abstracted and forgetful always when I think of Beatrice) of other matters of interest, which else I should have been glad to have dwelt upon. I say matters of interest, because while I know that my career is one surrounded by simple and ordinary incidents, yet in the pleasant relation of common-places, where truth and nature are observed, there is a something which awakens sympathy, and stimulates pleasure. I propose, therefore, to gossip on for a few pages more, setting down such simple things as I see and do, very honestly, believe me, and very faithfully, I sincerely trust.

If I were to follow my own inclinings, I could write about my obscure home by the hour, filling up many pages with the trifling, but I am assured pleasing, incidents of my daily life; but however vain I may be in the belief of my power to please, the reader need not fear a prolix overflow of dullness and garrulousness. I shall remember Polonius—that is, his precept, and not his practice—and if tediousness *be* the outward limbs, I am too good a gardener not to know the use and practice of the pruning knife.

I bear a suspicious character among my neighbors. They call me queer. They cannot understand my habits, my pursuits, my manners, or my tastes. I am sorry, indeed, to say that there is not much assimilation of feeling between us. Their rigid, hard, utilitarian ideas do not accord with mine; and my idleness, and dreamy ramblings, my fondness for the forest solitudes, and my proneness to the siesta on the grassy slopes of cherished "Shady Side," excite in them surprise, condemnation, and sometimes, among the gentler sort, commiseration. And then what with the pony, the dogs, and the other creatures about me, my home is but little better than a barn; my dress is rather odd and fantastic, and I live without rule, guided only by the vagaries of my caprice—things which all tend to injure me in the estimation of my neighbors. Besides, I have a trick of musing and thinking aloud, as I wander and ramble about, and I have caught more than once, as I have been passing a group of persons, a finger significantly touched upon the forehead, and meaning looks exchanged among them.

But with one class, thank fortune, I am always popular. I mean the children—and more particularly, the little girls. I confess that I like little girls. Nothing arrests my attention so quick as a pair of pantalettes, or a sun-hood coming round a corner. I like to stand and watch school-girls, fresh and radiant, on their way to their morning tasks. Indeed, I will frequently step out of my way when sauntering towards "Shady Side," if I think I can meet three or four little girls who pass every morning near my haunts, "with satchel on arm," tripping, not "stealing" their way, willingly to school. The little creatures seem to like me. They will look at me blushingly, and with bright eyes, and more than once, while sitting upon a green bank with my rod across my knee, I have been surprised by a timid, smiling youngster, whom I have patted on the head at some odd time, coming sidling up to me, quite delighted when my outstretched hand bespeaks the coveted invitation to come.

Sometimes I meet with a group of farm children coming from the fields, halting perhaps by the roadside fence to see me pass; the younger ones slily peeping out from behind the skirts of the eldest, and their round, brown faces gleaming with delight at the pleasant words I address them. If I stop to talk with them, I am pleased at the quickness with which their fear of me is overcome, at the unreserved frankness and freedom which something in me seems always to induce.

In fact, the children all appear to look upon me as a sort of Robinson Crusoe. Nothing delights them so much as an excuse to come up to my cottage, where everything is so royally free, where there are but few conventional observances; where dogs, cats, and all living creatures exist on a splendid democratic level of equal rights. Children are indeed your only true democrats. Fine linen and silks have no charms for them. A play-fellow in rags, if he only possess those requisites of fair-play, courage, and high spirits which children always exact, is as acceptable as the son of a millionaire.

It was my fondness for girlhood as a generality, which first attracted me to Beatrice—a fondness becoming in her case, intensified into a passion.

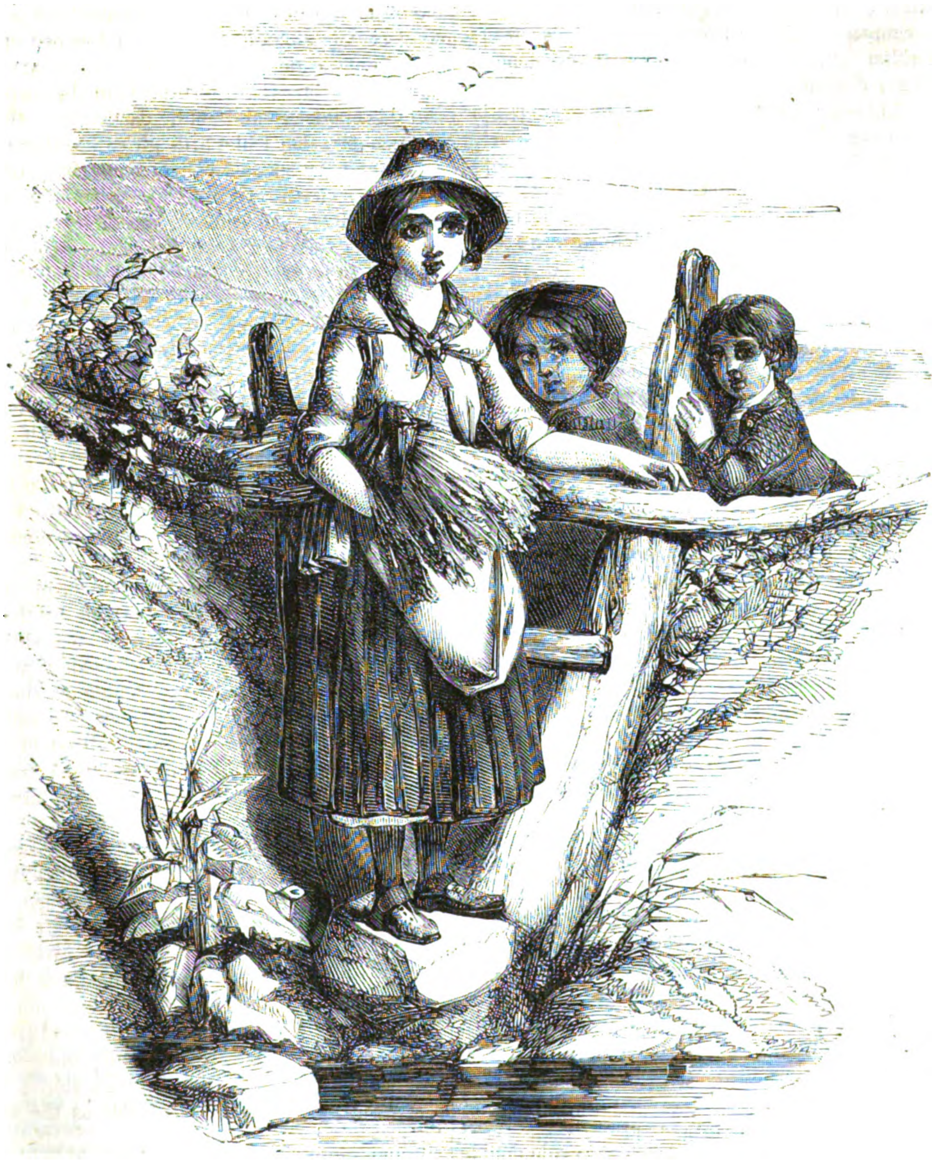
Indeed love seems to be unaccountable when bestowed upon the grander specimens of womanhood. As I understand the passion (which after all may be very absurdly), it is a something in which there is protection on one side, and up-looking on the other. I think of it always, as if I were shrouding a form, wing-like, whose face, lain upon my breast, peers up through the enfolding embrace, smilingly and trustingly into mine.

Ah, Beatrice! Beatrice!

"Bah! Bread and butter!" cries the strong-minded.

"Sympathy and companionship!" exclaim others.

Well, I make the confession frankly. I like bread and butter girls. And as for sympathy, how is it that girlhood has afforded me some of the sweetest hours of companionship I've ever known? There are my nieces, from thirty down to fifteen, on Murray Hill. When I was in town last, and called there, Sally (aged fifteen), was behind the curtains buried in one of Hawthorne's volumes, and Miss Susan (aged twenty-five), engrossed with her milliner. And when I asked Miss Susan how she liked "As You Like It,' which I knew she had seen performed two nights before at Wallack's, she answered that it was very funny!! A little startled and a good deal crusty at this absurdity, I betook myself to Sally. Being crusty, as I said, I abused Hawthorne to her. She opened her eyes widely and with surprise, and very sweetly said a word in deprecation of my criticism. Then I began to unfold



to her what Hawthorne is (for Hawthorne is my favorite), and to lay open to her and point out his subtle excellences, to which, with drinking eyes and animated cheek, she listened. It was pleasant to glean her own crude, vague impressions, strong in their depth, but only looking clearer in their expression. It was pleasant to see her eye light up at my suggestions, to see her quick fancy catch, at, and follow the threads of my thoughts. It was pleasant to see youth in its first impressions eager for the light, swelling under its new weight of wonder, admiration, and strange sensations of delight. I turned from this companionship to ask Miss Susan how *she* liked Hawthorne?

"Oh, he's so horrid gloomy!" was the appreciative and elegant reply.

Girlhood is the opening flower with the dew yet unbrushed from its surface, and I am willing to let its freshness compensate for all the after knowledge which in its meridian and full blown splendor, it will come to know. I am disposed to admire the lofty qualities of "true womanhood," but I must love the lovelier, gentler kind, whose eyes and smiles look upward. It is a vain, arrogant conceit, I know, to liken myself to a rugged rock, or forest tree, up which the vine should clamber and nestle with closely-knitting tendrils to its heart, but it is an old, long treasured fancy, which women's conventions cannot batter out of me.

Let me be honest and confess to what is very likely a weighty reason for my preference for girlhood. Woman measures my height too closely with her own. She isn't to be deceived into believing me a greater man than nature gives me warrant for. This is what I don't like. Every one desires to be a hero to the sex—I am only one to the little girls unprovided with younger beaux—but to these, at least, my heart thrills with strange sensations, and old and ugly as I am, girlhood will always be a life-poem to me.

Sometimes when "Shady Side" needs some intervening scene to bring back its beauties more freshly, I will mount my pony, throw "Truemark" over my shoulder, and ride towards the mountains in search of game. I am not always successful, and care very little whether I am or not. My main object is always gained—change and excitement. Sometimes, indeed, when hotly pursuing some creature who eludes me, I very strangely find my sympathies siding against myself in favor of the pursued—the result, I presume, of some instinctive principle of supporting the weak against the strong—and I will even experience a pleasure, if the hunted creature succeeds in escaping from my clutches. This is not sportsmanlike, and I dare say, excites the contempt and mirth of some of my readers, but I positively assert the feeling to be genuine—a sufficient reason for setting it down, so I consider.

I have sometimes town visitors who come up from the great city during the summer vacations. I always welcome them gladly, but at the same time with a Declaration of Independence. I say to them: the cats are to be teased and the dogs worried to any extent it may please you; the rooster's tail is entirely at your service; the pony is your peculiar property to ride double or quadruple as you please, provided you can crowd so many upon his short, round, ball-like back, and he manifest no disposition to kick up a revolution and overthrow the reining powers; the gardens are free to your experiments in amateur horticulture, even to the extent of the destruction of my pea-beds and the downfall of my nurslings; the fruit, green or otherwise, is none of it forbidden, with this gratuitous suggestion, however, that there isn't a doctor nor a dose of physic within six miles; in brief, whatever you see you may put to any use your humor prompts, with this single understanding, that I, individually, must be allowed to follow my peculiar pursuits, to indulge in my habits and act out my idiosyncrasies as freely, and with as little constraint, as if my poor roof were not honored by your presence.

The plan works well. We are all guests alike—a community wherein exists independence entire and perfect, and it soon grows into a kind of conceded fact that Molly, my creature of all work, many humors, and occasional tantrums, is the only real potentate amongst us—one, whose official dispensations from the kitchen we all eagerly watch, while for their sake we will even go so far as to play courtiers to her sovereignty, and propitiate her good will in whatever way we can. At dinner we always meet, but previous to that important hour we walk, ride, fish, hunt, chat, smoke, read, sleep, eat (some do a little of each), as we are individually prompted, but after dinner we usually assemble with cigars and wine in the pavilion I have recently attached to my house.

This pavilion I must describe. It is built almost entirely of glass, saving the roof and the slight iron framework. The floor is level with the sward, and thick trees which stand about it interlace their branches thickly above the roof. When its wide glass doors, that reach to the roof, are thrown open, there is air and light as free and pleasant as if we were in a forest. In order that the shade should be perfect, and the sun in nowise heat the structure, I have caused Venetian awnings to be erected all around the exposed sides. Vines have been trailed up the iron columns; the ceiling is tinted with a light blue—the coolest of colors, and the iron girders and supporters are of the same hue. Chairs of many forms, of light willow work, are set thickly about; tables on which are piled sundry papers and publications; on the wall to the house side, hang a few choice prints; a matting covers the floor. Indeed the reader may well believe me, that this pavilion is of all things the most envied by my guests, and on summer afternoons what with cigars, ices, fruit, such games as are voted popular, new books, cool air, the smell of flowers and shrubbery, it affords no slight degree of comfort and happiness to those gathered within it.

The above was written yesterday. To-day, among the letters by the morning post was one from Beatrice. It is five years since we parted. Only once before in that period have I heard from her. I trembled when I opened the letter, and ever since its perusal I can only sit and muse upon those hours whose light crosses the backward vista of my life in one strong, rich flood, to which memory ever will have recourse, and where I am prone to bury the present in dreams golden and glorious. Her letter—I have read it twenty times—reads thus:

"My Dear Friend:

Not a summer has passed since I parted from you without extinguishing a hope of seeing you; and upon each recurring June when the certainty was forced upon me, that my husband's affairs would not permit the hoped for visit, the disappointment, believe me, has been severe indeed. My dear friend, I am happier now—much happier than when I wrote to you before. I am a mother. For a long time I despaired of this wished for consummation to my happiness, but at last it pleased heaven to respond to my prayers. My little one is more than six months old. It is a daughter, and her father *would* call her Beatrice. I am very happy, dear old friend, looking now down into the face of my cherished one, even while my thoughts wander off backward to those hours that so swiftly glided away amid the haunts of "The Shady Side." When I think of my childhood I think of that period of my existence. Whenever I recall the periods of pure happiness I have experienced, "The Shady Side" comes crowding up before them all. I cannot come to you, dear sir, and I want to see you much—and show you my baby. Will you not some day come to me?"

Signed "Beatrice"—nothing more. The burden of her note is happiness—of my heart loneliness. I will not see her. The wound must not be opened afresh. An unspoken word, or a chance look might reveal to her all that I bear and have borne within me—and I would not cause her a pang on account of the foolish dreams I have nourished, for all my worldly wealth.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END.

A GERMAN TALE.

I have not lived in the world till the present time—I am now bordering upon sixty—without having made some observations upon men—their mental and moral structure, their physical qualifications, &c. I do not think I am any better, in a pecuniary point of view, for having done so; but I am certainly persuaded of this: that it has enabled me to penetrate with greater facility into the human character, trace out the springs of action, and surmise with tolerable accuracy the events that are likely to arise from certain proceedings. This observant disposition has led me to the conclusion that man is an erratic, eccentric, phlegmatic creature, fond of change, novelty, money, worldly superiority, and so forth. To-day he is himself; to-morrow he is somebody else. He is perpetually acted upon by circumstances; and a week may cause him to lose his identity altogether, and leave him without a single trace of his personal existence. The aborigines of New Zealand paint their bodies, and decorate their heads with feathers. The lounger of Bond street perpetually wears a glass on his eye, and suffers a tuft of hair to grow upon his chin and upper lip; if his hair be not of the orthodox color, he dyes it; if his teeth have decayed, he replaces them with false ones. It is hard to say which of these two men most resembles the natural one.

If a man were to absent himself from civilized society for a month, he would be so far in arrears when he returned, that he would well-nigh despair of ever being able to overtake the world again. So many novelties in dress—so many new ceremonials in society—so many new methods of doing so many new things—so many new events in the social, political, scientific, commercial, sporting, dramatic, operatic, &c. &c. worlds, shall have taken place in the interim, that he will be perfectly astounded and dispirited with the vast accumulation of novelty which presents itself to him. And yet it is all necessary for his comfort, and for the artificial state in which he lives. The child of two years, who changes his toys every five minutes, is not more inconstant than that other child of maturer years, who has attained to manhood.

I do not intend to write a homily upon man, but to relate a few circumstances connected with a recent tour in Germany. The whims and eccentricities of a strange old man have suggested the rambling reflections with which this article is opened: who he was, I know not. He occasioned me some alarm and uneasiness, but I forgive him. He probably meant well; at all events, I am willing to suppose that he did.

There was no country in the world, I may remark, *en passant*, that I was more anxious of travelling through than Germany. I liked the character of the people; I liked their language, their manners and customs; and, above all, I liked that fine metaphysical feature which so frequently pervades their studies. I had read of their forests and their mountains, their valleys and their streams, teeming with legendary lore. I had pictured to myself their dilapidated castles, and their caverns by the sea, and the sea-nymphs who are said to inhabit them; in a word, I had become so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the German people, that the wish to become better acquainted with them was no longer to be kept in abeyance, nor my long-projected visit to that country to be deferred.

I departed from England in the autumn. I passed through most of the German states—visited the principal cities and towns, and saw, in short, as much as, if not more than, most tourists. From the letters of introduction which I carried with me, I was enabled to gain access to the best society; and nothing used to afford me more pleasure than to hear a handsome and accomplished woman speak her native tongue with purity. I have frequently heard the German language objected to as being harsh and unmusical; but O, sapient linguist! hear it from rich, coral lips—hear those guttural sounds emanate from between two rows of teeth which rival the most beautiful ivory—hear those meaning-fraught words uttered with eyes beaming with tenderness and affection—hear them when the fair speaker's countenance is lit up with pleasure and excitement—and O, hear them when there is none to mar, by unseemly intrusion, that moment of love and rapture; and if you can refrain from pressing the coral lips to yours, fie upon your morality and impassiveness.

However, *revenons à nos moutons;* I shall not speak of the places which I visited during my travels. I shall therefore say very briefly, that after being six weeks in Germany, I found myself one dismally-dark night on a very lonely road some miles from the town of Leipzig. I had travelled a considerable distance on the day in question on foot, and I was making my way to the nearest *Gasthaus*, where I intended to remain for the night. A great portion of my journeying, I may remark, was performed on foot. I had a knapsack on my back, stored with plenty of provisions, and a good staff in my hand, and I preferred this mode of travelling to any other. My time was at my own command; there was no necessity, therefore, for me to pass places with the rapidity of lightning, and make a boast afterwards to my friends of having seen them.

The road, as I have just said, on which I was travelling, was very lonely; it was worse—it was skirted on both sides by two densely-planted forests, which stretched away in the direction in which I was proceeding for a considerable distance. What if some ruffian were springing from the midst of them—some gentleman in the Carl Moor style, and making an attack on me; or if some spectre were revealing itself, arrayed in all the horrors with which the Germans are apt to invest these shadowy beings! I was not fond of being alone on such an occasion, and was, I confess, a little superstitious. I was therefore particularly anxious to reach "mine inn," totally ignorant of the precise spot in which it was to be found. I travelled on, and on, and on, as the nursery tale says, and at last, to pursue the same style of composition, I came to a large house which stood by the roadside. I stood and inspected it very closely; but the night was so dark, that I could not make out whether it was a private house or one of public entertainment. I was foot-sore and hungry, and loath to travel any farther for the night. I knocked at the door, but no one answered my summons; I repeated the process half a dozen times with the same result. I concluded that the house was not occupied, so I walked on. I had not proceeded far when I met a decrepit old man, who seemed to be walking towards the house in question.

"Good evening," I said to him, as he approached.

"Good evening," he repeated.

"Can you direct me to a house," I inquired, "where I can obtain a lodging for the night?"

"I will give you a lodging at the house close at hand here, on three conditions."

"Name them," I said.

"The first is, that you will not attempt to look at my face; the second is, that you will ask no questions concerning anything you may see; the third is, that after your departure you will never cross the threshold of the house again."

"To all these conditions I readily subscribe; but wherefore should you impose such mysterious restrictions?"

"I object to questions," said the old man, curtly.

"I perceive—I perceive," I said, checking myself.

In a few minutes we reached the house: we had no sooner done so than the door, by some incomprehensible agency of which I was totally ignorant, was thrown open. The old man led the way into a room, saying, as he did so—"You will find everything here for your accommodation."

I turned towards him to thank him; but when I raised my eyes I found, to my inexpressible horror and astonishment, he was gone! Heaven and earth! whither had he gone? By what means had he disappeared so unaccountably? There was no mode of egress by the walls or floor, that I could perceive. He had not escaped by the door; for he could not have done so without my observing him. I turned pale, and trembled. The singularity of my position at once burst upon my mind. I knew not where I was; I knew not who the occupants of the house were—I knew not their character. My imagination forthwith pictured a series of dangers and difficulties of the most frightful and disagreeable character. Why had I come hither? A dilapidated ruin—a crazy barn—a hedge—nay, the open canopy of heaven—were a better covering, with a mind at ease, than a palace with a mind agitated by a thousand vague and indefinable misgivings. Had I not read a thousand times of deeds of violence which had been perpetrated upon belated travellers? Had I not read of the arts and stratagems resorted to, to entrap them? This old man was no doubt in league with others. Why all this mystery? why those strange and incomprehensible conditions? I was either a fool or a madman. Why did I suffer myself to be so misled? Why had I not satisfied myself that I was going to a place of safety, before agreeing to the conditions stipulated by the old man? His object evidently was to deceive me. This was one view of the case; the other was still less inviting. There was something very remarkable about this old man. Why did he conceal his features from me? I may observe, that whenever I attempted to look at his face, he turned it from me. If this old man were not in league with some desperadoes, he was something worse. He was—eh? my limbs shook beneath me as the thought flashed across my mind—he was not human—he was not of this earth—he was in league with evil spirits. I sat down and endeavored to compose myself. I partially succeeded. I shortly after rose from my seat, and began to inspect the furniture of the room. It was costly, but antique, and in a former day had no doubt been considered elegant. When I had in some degree satisfied my curiosity in respect to the room, my eyes were suddenly attracted by a walking-stick which lay upon the table.

"Thank heaven!" I exclaimed; "here is something belonging to this old man; for this, I believe, is his stick."

I took it up, but in a moment it fell from my hand, and came in contact with the floor with a rattling noise. I almost swooned at this incident, and huge drops began to gather upon my brow. If the stick had possessed life; if it had spoken—moved; if its mere touch had imparted a burning fever to my veins, or if it had thrilled me as with an electric shock—it could not have occasioned me more horror and consternation. I sank into a large easy-chair, and for some minutes remained motionless. At length I recovered. The stick lay upon the floor where it had fallen: it had not moved; it had not walked across the floor of its own free will; it had not danced through the air like a phantom-stick; in short, it had only demeaned itself as a piece of good stout thorn or ash, or any other ordinary stick whatever; and yet the sight of it again almost threw me into my former state of agitation. There it lay, as still as anything else in the room, and yet, at the moment, I dared not approach it for any consideration. It was not because it belonged to the old man—it was not because I had seen him walking with it—that I felt such a dread of it. No. It was the stick itself that inspired me with such horror. I have seen sticks of all descriptions. I have seen one with a very short curve—I have seen another with a great club at the end; I have seen the genteel cane; I have seen some mounted with silver—some with gold, with silk tassels pending from their heads. I have seen them ornamented with the heads of dogs, horses, foxes, men; but I never saw one possessing such a head as the stick in question. Is there anything dreadful in a stick? I could not have conceived it possible before the night I speak of; no doubt the circumstances by which I was surrounded led to a deeper feeling of awe and consternation than could have happened if I had been differently situated. A miniature human skull was placed at the top of the stick, executed in a masterly style. Of what it was made I know not; but it had all the appearance and color of the actual human skull. If it had not been too small, I should have said it was real. Beneath the skull was placed the following inscription, on a circular ring of gold: "*Eram, es, sum, eris.*" At another time, these words would have admonished me—at the moment, I could not think of them. I could only think of the skull, and of the taste of the owner who had placed this emblem of mortality so prominently before the eyes. Was the old man a philosopher—a moralist? Had he studied in the school of the ancient Egyptians, who were in the habit of placing a skeleton at their banquets to remind them of death? I could not divine his meaning.

I had scarcely recovered from my fright, when the door of the room was thrown open, and a boy, habited in a black livery, entered.

"My master has requested me to ask if you require any refreshments before you retire to rest?"

For some moments I could not speak. At length I stammered out, "No, no—I thank your master—I do not feel hungry."

"Follow me then, sir, if you please."

"I will stay here, if you will permit me," I said.

"There is a room already provided for you;" and so saying, he motioned me to follow.

I involuntarily obeyed the mandate. I felt, indeed, as though I were under a power I could not resist. "Who, who," I ventured tremulously to ask, "is your master?"

The boy placed his finger upon his lips to imply silence.

I followed my conductor. He led me up a short flight of stairs, and then we entered a kind of oblong gallery; at one end there was a small room, in which was placed a bed hung with black.

"This is your apartment, sir," said the boy, pointing to the room I have just mentioned. "At eight o'clock in the morning, breakfast will be served you in the room we have just quitted."

So saying, he departed.

I was quite at a loss to comprehend this mysterious treatment. There was nothing remarkable in the room, save its sombre appearance. I felt fatigued, and longed for repose: I did not undress, but extinguished the light.

I know not how long I had been in bed, but I was aroused from a profound slumber by delicious strains of music; I listened for some minutes, expecting they would cease, but they continued without interruption. I could not rest. I was greatly agitated and alarmed, and had no conception as to what they could portend. I arose from my bed. I stealthily opened the door of the chamber in which I slept, and a flood of light burst upon my eyes. I looked over the railing of the gallery, and, to my ineffable surprise, I saw figures moving at the further end of the chamber below.

There were several ladies and gentlemen grouped round an object that seemed to awaken the utmost interest. They were all gaily dressed, and their countenances were lit up with joy and excitement. They appeared to be conversing together with great familiarity; but although I observed their lips move, I could not hear any sounds they uttered. Their attention was absorbed by the object that was placed in the midst of them. The room in which they were assembled was elegantly furnished. I perceived, however, that it was a bed-chamber, and on one side of the room stood a bed, hung with superb white hangings; a lady sat in bed, supported by pillows: her appearance indicated that she was just recovering from severe illness. I was most anxious to know what object it was around which the ladies and gentlemen were grouped. My curiosity was soon gratified, for I perceived that it was an infant which had apparently only lately been ushered into the world. The child, I remarked, by the contortions of its countenance, was cross; but I heard not a sound, save that of the music to which I have referred. The figures moved about like aerial beings, yet they were as palpable as any forms of flesh and blood

I had ever beheld: they conversed—they laughed—they moved various articles of furniture, but these operations created no noise whatever. It was strange. What were they? Were they inhabitants of this world, or were they spirits? Whilst I meditated upon this subject, they melted, as it were, away; the appointments of the room simultaneously disappeared, and a new scene burst upon my astonished senses.

A flower-garden, in all the luxuriousness of summer, presented itself: the trees were clad with the brightest foliage, and were laden with the most luscious fruit—the flowers basked in the glorious sunshine—the lark mounted with radiant wing the unclouded atmosphere, and seemed, as he ascended, to be pouring out his melodious strains. The bee roved from flower to flower, and thousands of insects filled the air. In one part of the garden I perceived a group of young children; their countenances beamed with health and innocence: they were seated upon a small plot of grass, and were making wreaths of flowers, with which they decorated each other. In another part of the garden I observed more children, some playing at shuttlecock, others chasing butterflies. Another small group were reposing by the side of a small stream of water, and were examining their shadows reflected therein. The scene was enchanting—there was nothing to mar its beauty—all was innocence, joy, health, contentment.

Suddenly the scene again changed, and a large field spread itself before me. In one part I saw a number of youths engaged at cricket—in a different part there were others amusing themselves with foot-ball; a third party was engaged in some game, the nature of which I did not thoroughly comprehend. The scene was not so beautiful as the former one, but still there was a degree of hilarity and good-humor about it that was very refreshing. It passed away as its predecessors had done, and was succeeded by another of surpassing beauty. It was moonlight—a rich landscape lay before me, through which a small rivulet wound its way in a serpentine course. On either side of the stream was a thick umbrageous wood; the moon's rays silvered the tops of the trees, and danced upon the surface of the water. To the left of the view stood a grey and time-worn ruin, overgrown with ivy and other plants; to the right, and upon the opposite bank of the river, rose a stately mansion of modern structure. The moon's rays brought every portion of the building out in strong relief. It stood upon elevated ground, with an elegant terrace in front; the gardens lay beneath, and extended towards the margin of the stream. A scene so enchanting I do not remember ever to have witnessed: I was in raptures with it. I had not gazed long upon it, when two figures appeared on the terrace. I perceived they were a lady and a gentleman; they were both young. A small cloak was thrown over the shoulders of the lady: the arm of her companion encircled her waist as they walked two and fro: her face was beautiful—it was one of those faces which we see but seldom, but which leave an impression that is never to be obliterated from the mind. The appearance of her lover was also prepossessing, though perhaps not to the same degree as that of his companion. It was a scene worthy of lovers, and one that must greatly have contributed to the ecstatic pleasure of which they seemed to be partaking. Again the scene changed, and I now beheld a large public assembly: there was an orator elevated upon one of the benches; he was haranguing those around him. His words seemed to produce an electric effect upon the assembly. Every one around him was listening with the most profound attention, and when he sat down a thrill of admiration pervaded his fellow-senators. He sank back exhausted and fatigued, and another orator immediately arose from his seat.

But this scene quickly vanished, and a dreary prospect now succeeded. It was winter. The trees were stripped of their leaves—all vegetation was suspended. A bleak common rose upon my view, along which a decrepit and tottering old man was directing his steps. He was so feeble that it was only with the aid of his staff that he could support himself. He seemed to be suffering as much from physical disease as from the coldness of the season; his eyes were dull and sunken in his head; his face haggard and careworn; his dress hung loosely upon him, and was arranged without any regard to taste. As he toiled slowly along the road, the shadows of evening were fast gathering around him, imparting a still more gloomy aspect to the scene. The music, which had hitherto been gay and animating, became sad and sorrowful. The view, indeed, was by no means captivating, and I was not displeased when it passed away.

How shall I convey my astonishment at the one which succeeded? It was still more gloomy—still more desolate than its predecessor. A funeral procession passed before me: there was the hearse, drawn by black horses heavily plumed—there was the churchyard in the distance, and I thought I could perceive the clergyman waiting to conduct the funeral procession into the church. I was horrified, and my limbs refused their office. I sank upon the floor. My sudden indisposition, however, was but momentary; for I rapidly recovered, and summoned courage to place myself again in a standing attitude. My astonishment was increased tenfold. I now beheld a miniature representation of each of the *tableaux* I had witnessed, and beneath the whole were inscribed, in black letters, the following words:

"Vanity of Vanities—All is Vanity."

I staggered into my room, and fell prostrate upon the floor. I remember nothing further until I heard a knocking at my door. It was the boy, to announce that it was seven o'clock. This aroused me, and I was glad to find that it was morning.

I descended the stairs, and found my way to the room into which I had been conducted on the previous night. A substantial breakfast was placed before me, of which I sparingly partook.

When I was ready to depart, I asked the boy if his master would permit me to take my leave of him. He replied in the negative.

"I beg you will return him my thanks for his hospitality."

He promised to do so, and I quitted this extraordinary habitation; the boy at the same time handing me a letter, which he said was from his master, and which he requested I would not read till I was some distance off. I promised to obey, and pursued my way. I was curious to know what the letter contained, and, after I had travelled a few miles, I opened it. Its contents I transcribe below:

"SIR:—It is not improbable that you will leave my house with an impression upon your mind that some magic has been employed to produce the sights of which you were a witness last night, and that they were produced for the purpose of terrifying you, and rendering your lodging uncomfortable. If such be your impressions, they are altogether erroneous. I am myself an eccentric old man, living by myself; without friends or relations, and without, perhaps, a very friendly feeling towards the human family. I am much addicted to the study of moral philosophy. I have for years observed the follies and the vanities of life. I have speculated upon the shortness of man's career. I have moralized upon the various stages he passes through in the course of his life; and once a year I trace his career, from the cradle to the grave, by a series of *tableaux*. At one end of the gallery there is placed a large mirror, at the other end are the performers and scenes which compose the various *tableaux*. It is merely the reflections that are visible in the mirror. The day on which you happened to visit my house was the anniversary of my birth-day: it is on that day, for the last twenty years, that this exhibition has taken place. If you can enter into my feelings, what you have seen may, perhaps, not be altogether with advantage to you personally. With every feeling of respect, I am, &c.,

A. VON E——."

This curious epistle astonished me not a little. I have nothing further to add, than that a week or two after my adventure, I landed safely again in my native land.

SUNSET MUSINGS.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

AWAY from the town with its bustle and heat,
I thoughtfully linger alone in the shade;
Sweet musical murmurs where rivulets meet
Swell up to my ear from the evergreen glade.
I dreamily feel that bright waters are gushing
Through grasses and ferns that droop over their bed,—
I know where the wild rose is dewily blushing—
For the waves take a tinge from its delicate red.

The meadows are gorgeous and rich with the sheen
Of lily bells mottled with ruby and gold,
Their broad undulations of tremulous green
Away to the zenith are softly unrolled.
Far, far o'er the slopes where the sunset is shining,
The daisies and buttercups stoop to the breeze,
And wild honeysuckles are softly entwining
Their blossoms and leaves with the tamarisk trees.

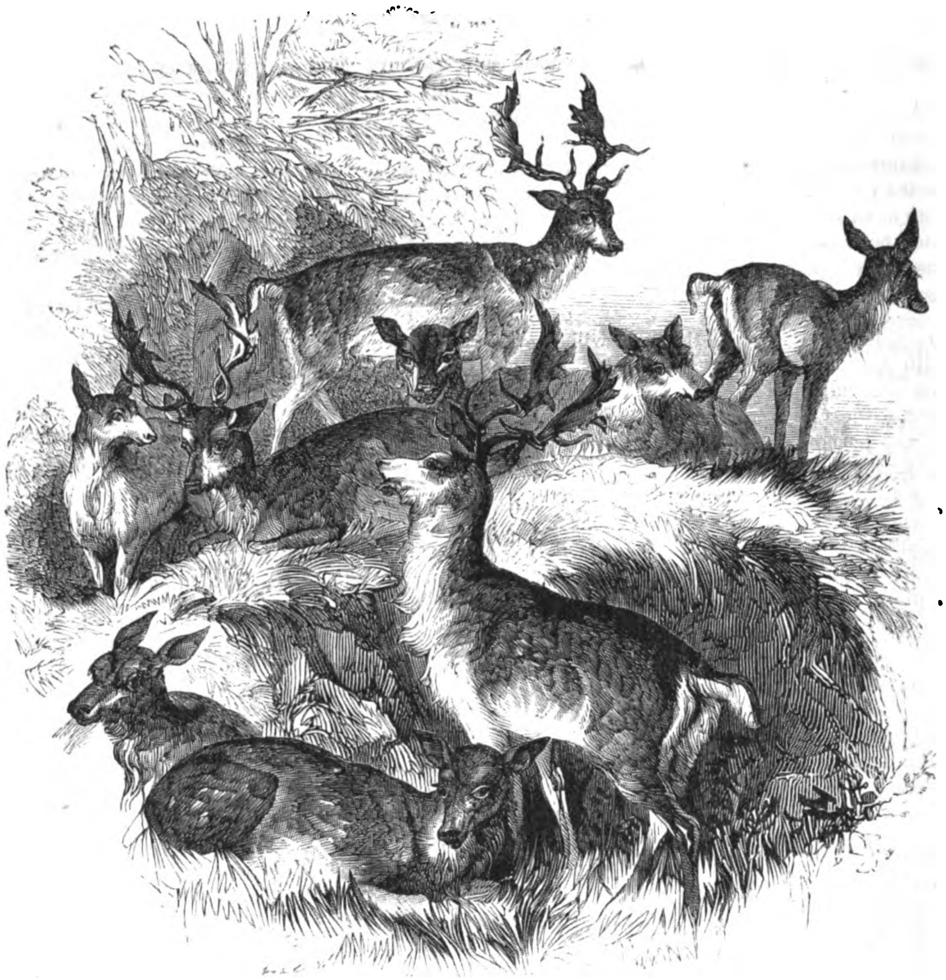
The branches are garlanded richly with cherries,
That bend in their leafiness o'er my retreat;
The hazlenut hedges are ruddy with berries
That ripen and grow where the clover is sweet.
The sunset its last golden lances is throwing
Aslant on the mountains, aslant on the hill;
The west in a deluge of crimson is glowing,
And glimpses of purple float over the rill.

With his plumage all wet with the dewy perfume—
Like a beautiful thought that must perish or burn,
A humming bird floats through the exquisite gloom
And buries himself in the wild trumpet's urn.
With gold on his breast, 'mid the clustering roses,
Forgetting the blossoms he kissed in the sun,
The bee, overladen with honey, reposes,
Nor recks of the mischief his roaming has done.

The oriole seeketh his hammock-like nest
Where he dreamily swings in the hush of the hour;
The oxen are sluggishly kneeling at rest,
And the squirrel lies close in his walnut tree bower.
A luminous glow in the westward is dying
Like a wail of soft gossamer floating from sight;
On meadow and mountains the crimson is dying,
And stars tremble out on the beautiful night.

'Tis darker, still darker—a silence profound
Is brooding, like sleep, over upland and dale;
The wind is at rest, and I hear not a sound,
Save the whippoorwill plaintively making his wail;
Where the soft willow branches around him are sweeping
With star-lighted dew on their motionless leaves,
That lonely old night-bird his vigil is keeping,
And tells the pale stars how he suffers and grieves.

'Tis a moment for thought when the fathomless soul
Unseals to the magic of nature in tears,
When springs of deep feeling overflow our control,
And moments concentrate the memory of years—
When sweet inspirations are vividly gushing
In tears to the heart and in thought to the brain,
And all that is good in our nature is rushing
In blessings and prayer back to heaven again.



THE HAUNT OF THE FALLOW DEER.

The haunt of the Fallow Deer,
Of the creature wild and free,
By the waters flowing clear,
And the stately forest tree,
Where the air is cool and sweet,
And all is calm and still,
And Nature in her green retreat
Sits throned, and fears no ill.

The haunt of the Fallow Deer,
Amid the bosky dells,
Where the Blackbird whistles near
To the Foxglove's purple bells;
Where the Rabbit loves to sport
The bracken tall amid,
And the Valley Lily holds her court,
By grasses tall half hid.

The haunt of the Fallow Deer,
Beneath the giant Oak,
Where sounds no hunter's cheer,
Nor echoes woodman's stroke;
Where the Wild Thyme scents the gale,
And the azure Heath-bell swings,
And twinkling feet in the moonlight pale
Dance round the fairy rings.

The haunt of the Fallow Deer,
By the lonely woodland spring,
Where the Bullrush lifts its spear,
And the Honeysuckles cling;
Where waves the feathery Fern,
And the sunshine falls in gleams,
That ever shift, and change, and turn,
Like the shapes that people dreams.

The haunt of the Fallow Deer,
By the moorland spreading wide,
Amid whose herbage sere
The red Grouse loves to hide,
Where the Fox barks from the hill,
And the Owl hoots through the night,
And the glossy Blackcock croweth shrill
To hail the morning light.

The haunt of the Fallow Deer,
From cities far away,
Where twining roots appear,
Like serpents in their play;
Whereby are leafy nooks,
And mossy beds for rest;
Oh, throbbing brows and troubled looks,
Here cease your weary quest.

THE HUGUENOT'S DAUGHTER.

A TALE OF FRANCE.

A RELIGIOUS procession was proceeding through the forests in the neighborhood of Nismes, when it suddenly came to an open space occupied by a cottage of humble appearance, but bearing about it evidences of taste in its occupants. The walls were covered with vines so thickly matted together as to resemble a solid mass of verdure, and the yard in front was surrounded by a hedge of evergreens, while within the inclosure bloomed a few late flowers.

On a rustic portico in front of the cottage sat a girl of tender years, singing a psalm in a voice of clear, bird-like melody. She wore the common dress of the peasantry in that portion of the country; and the scarlet bodice, cut low in the neck, with short sleeves, showed the symmetry of a neatly-rounded form, though the smooth skin was browned to the hue of the berry. The soft black eyes and raven hair harmonized, however, with this complexion, and as she leaned against the dark background, made by the shining leaves of the ivy that covered the walls, she looked, in the gathering twilight, like a vivid picture of youthful joy, over whom the sad condition of her native land had not yet possessed the power to cast a shadow.

She held a piece of work in her busy fingers, and as she bent her head over it, she was so intensely occupied that she heeded not the approach of the holy procession, until, at a sign from the abbot, it stopped in front of the cottage. The sweet melody continued to ring out clear and full until the voice of the priest, speaking in tones of stern anger, startled her from her unconsciousness.

"Girl, are you not the daughter of Laval, the forester?"

She started, looked up, and at the sight of those before her, grew pallid as death; for, young as she was, she had learned to dread the appearance of the so-called vicegerents of Heaven as the prelude to bitter suffering to those that were dear to her.

"Why do you not answer?" he harshly asked, as she stood mute and trembling before him.

"I—I was so startled. Pardon me, father! Yes, I am the daughter of the forester. My parents are away, and while I watched for them I sang. Oh, Father Antoine, pardon me! I had forgotten that we are forbidden to sing the psalms; and indeed—indeed, I did not see the holy emblems coming!"

"Why do you not now kneel before them, wretched little heretic?" he thundered. "You know it is not permitted to your people to sing at all when this holy procession passes by, and yet you dared run such a risk! Do you know that severe punishment is decreed against those who are guilty of such irreverent conduct?"

The girl, trembling in every limb, sunk upon her knees, and raised her clasped hand deprecatingly toward him. A sudden thought struck the priest. He said, in the same commanding tone,

"Ask pardon for your crime in the name of holy Mother Church, or it shall go hard with you."

She gained courage to murmur,

"I have been taught to pray only in the name of Christ."

"And is not He, then, the head and founder of our Church? Pooh! child, who has taught you such absurd distinctions? Do as I bid you, or I will find means to make your heretical parents suffer for having so badly trained you."

This threat destroyed the little courage the girl had been able to summon. She faintly said,

"Oh no—on me let your anger fall. Spare my good father and mother. They have often admonished me not to sing the psalms, but I love them so much, I forgot. Oh! Father Antoine, it was only my own heedlessness; it was no fault of my parents."

"Then expiate your sin as I shall command, or take the consequences. Repeat after me a solemn recantation of the errors in which you have been reared; only on this condition will I pardon the breach of the laws of which you have been guilty. Refuse, and before the night has waned your whole family shall be cast into a dungeon, there to perish in their heresy, ruined in this world, and lost in the next."

His words were addressed to a child of fourteen years, in mortal terror of his power, and he well calculated the effect they would produce. She glanced down the foot-path leading to the cottage, but no form was approaching to sustain her sinking courage. She faltered,

"And shall my parents be safe from your anger if I do this?"

"They shall be; I promise it."

Again she wavered, and in great anguish exclaimed,

"Oh, Father Antoine, if you force me to do this, my father will cast me from him as unworthy! He can never trust me again. I shall become an outcast from his heart. As you have mercy exact not this from me!"

The priest grimly smiled, for he enjoyed her terror.

"Weigh your fears of their anger against the certainty of the punishment I have threatened, and then decide. What seems hard in my conduct to you now, will in the future be regarded by you as a signal interposition of Heaven in your favor."

The girl scarcely understood him, so bewildered were her faculties. Her parents, like all the Huguenots, had suffered deeply for their stedfast adherence to the religion they espoused, and threats of violence had often been used toward them. They lived in hourly dread that their humble position might not be able to protect them from the pitiless wrath that swept as a whirlwind over the land, levelling alike the lordly tree and the humble flower that found shelter beneath its shadow.

"Are you not the same girl to whom the Sisters of Mercy lately offered the advantages of a superior edu cation if you would abandon the errors inculcated by your parents?"

"The Sisters did make me such an offer, but I could not leave my home. Oh! Father Antoine, if you are really a good man, you will see that it is right to honor my father and mother as the Bible commands."

"And even to such as you the mysteries of that holy volume are laid bare by these sacrilegious heretics," said the priest, severely. "Girl, you have been badly trained by your parents, and it becomes my duty to remove you from their evil influence. Recant your errors as I command, or the strong arm of authority shall deal with those who have sinned against their duty toward you by risking the salvation of your immortal soul."

By this time the child was so exhausted by fright that she was ready to obey any command he might give her. Of a highly nervous temperament, and easily excited; impressed from infancy with a deep dread of the power of the priesthood; a witness, as years advanced, of the ruthless use made of that power, poor little Lucille had not one spark of courage left in her palpitating heart to give life to a spirit of resistance. She could only falter,

"Holy Father, what shall I do to avert your anger?"

"Repeat after me a renunciation of the errors in which you have been reared, and I promise you protection and advancement, such as your parents never dreamed of for a child of theirs."

"Tell me, then, what I must say."

The priest slowly repeated the form of words often dictated to children, and made by the laws binding upon them, even from the tender age of eight years. This recantation once uttered, the parents had no further power over them. They passed under the rule of the Church, and were trained in her dogmas, in defiance of all the opposition that could be offered by those to whom nature had alone given the right to control their opinions and form their characters.

Scarcely conscious of what she was doing, the faint voice of Lucille followed that of the priest, and when the fatal words were ended she fell forward with her face upon the turf, in an agony of emotion that would have touched any heart not utterly hardened by fanaticism.

Father Antoine said,

"Rise, daughter of the true faith, and follow me to an asylum where care and tenderness shall compensate you for the separation from those who have trained you only in heresy and rebellion."

"It is false," said a loud voice, and a man of tall and powerful frame bounded through the open door of the cottage. His black eyes were blazing with excitement, and his lips were white and tremulous with emotion. He raised his daughter from the ground, and, facing the priest, asked with a sort of subdued desperation,

"What does this mean? What have you done to frighten this child so fearfully?"

"I have received her renunciation of the errors in which she was reared," he coldly replied, "and you well know to what measures that must lead."

Laval relaxed his grasp upon the form of Lucille, and staggered back. He muttered in a broken voice,

"O Lord, in whom I have trusted, thou hast not permitted this evil to fall on me! My own one, that I trained so carefully, to fall from grace in the first moment of temptation."

The girl clung to his knees and piteously begged forgiveness; but he loosened her clasp as he said,

"No, no; you have chosen your path, and you must walk in it. Henceforth I have no claim on you. Take her, priest; the renegade daughter will make a fitting follower of the great Moloch, into which you and such as you have turned the Church of the Most High God."

Laval and his wife had approached the cottage by a pathway leading to the rear of the building, and until they entered its walls they were not aware of the scene acting in front. The mother, pallid and nearly sinking with agitation, stood in the doorway, holding in her arms an infant a few months old.

Repulsed by her father, Lucille turned toward her, and she looked up imploringly in her face as her white lips muttered,

"Mother, it was to save you all from the punishment due to my fault that I abjured. I forgot your warnings—I sang the psalms, as the procession came by, and incurred the penalty of imprisonment to us all. It was better to bear the punishment myself than have it fall on all alike. My baby brother would have died in the dungeon, shut out from the light of heaven. My father's strong arm would have become palsied, you would have perished, and my heedlessness the cause of all. Was it not better to avert these dire calamities, at any cost to myself?"

"If your eternal welfare had not also been at stake," replied the agonized mother; "but with that, you had no right to tamper. One soul is of more worth than the earthly existence of many bodies. I would sooner have seen you perish, true to your faith, than thus weakly to have resigned it."

"Right, right, wife," said Laval, gloomily; then turning to the priest, he added, "And you have wrung from the fears of a weak child a recantation of all she has been taught to consider sacred; you will proclaim her enforced conversion as a triumph of the true faith over heretical doctrines. You have taken a cruel advantage of my absence to obtain from her terror what my daughter would never voluntarily have acknowledged. She is yet too young to be responsible for her own acts."

"The law permits even younger children to choose the true faith," replied the abbot. "If she is old enough to comprehend error, she is also capable of following truth. Her choice is made, and she will not now be permitted to recoil from it: and learn farther, that only through forbearance, purchased by her submission, do I refrain from proceeding to extremities against you and your wife for your irreverent conduct in the presence of the sacred body of Christ. Come, girl, I have wasted too much time here; follow me, and take heed that you stray neither to the right nor to the left. I will place you at once with the Sisters of Mercy, where you will be well cared for."

Lucille arose, and stretched arms imploringly toward her father. As if moved by an uncontrollable impulse, Laval rushed toward her, and pressed her with frantic force to his heart. His hand sought the handle of a knife he wore in his breast, and his fingers nervously clutched it, with the half-formed determination to take her life sooner than surrender her to the protection of the Church. The glittering blade was partly unsheathed, when Lucille comprehended his intention. She faintly said,

"Kill me, then; it will be better to die in your arms than to follow that man."

Her eyes were raised to his, and there was something in their expression that disarmed him. He groaned.

"Oh, had this spirit only sustained you until I came, I could have saved you. I will do it yet, my child, or die in the attempt. You shall not be twice lost—to you earthly parent, and to your Father in heaven."

He passionately kissed her cheek, lips, and brow, and then resigned her to her mother.

"You should have died sooner than recant," said the latter; "but since it is so, you must go, and we may never meet you again. A blight has fallen on our humble home, and now a day, an hour may compass the destruction of us all."

Madame Laval knew that in resigning her daughter to the priest, she lost her as effectually as if death had taken her from her arms; yet she parted from her with apparent calmness. Lucille pressed the soft cheek of her infant brother to her lips in a transport of anguish which was increased by the laughing glee with which the little fellow bounded to meet her caress.

Then, with lingering steps, she went out of the little enclosure, and crossing her hands upon her breast, followed the procession with a world of suffering in the young heart lately so full of joyful hope and youthful happiness. She did not dare to give one backward glance to the home she was leaving, lest she should turn and fly again to the beloved ones whose hearts were riven with anguish at her loss.

Laval's burning eyes were fixed upon her receding form with feelings no language can portray. Powerless to gain redress for this great outrage against the holiest tie of nature, all the fire of his impetuous soul was aroused by the very consciousness of his inability to assert his right to protect his dearly-cherished daughter. Though lowly in station, and dependent on labor for his support, the forester, in spite of the religious persecution that raged around him, had enjoyed happiness in his humble home. The bright face, the sweet voice of his beautiful child, were his solace for every evil; and now she was torn from him to be placed under the powerful influence of that Church which never scrupled to use any means by which the minds of the young could be influenced. He knew Lucille to imaginative and full of enthusiasm: when trained by the subtle intellects that would have entire control over her, what might be her future career? In imagination he beheld her the persecutor of the faith in which she had been reared—trampling under foot its simple and pure teachings, while she bowed in reverence before the blood-stained altar which emulated pagan cruelties in the tortures inflicted on its victims.

This picture was more than the father could bear; and uttering a fierce cry, with one bound he cleared the yard, as a bend in the pathway shut his daughter from his sight, and with fleet steps went in pursuit of her. He did not pause to reflect on the consequences—he only felt that he could die sooner than permit his darling child to be thus ruthlessly torn from him.

The abbot walked with slow and dignified motion, mechanically repeating his Aves, followed by the others, and the enraged father soon overtook them. The acolytes, apparently unmoved by the scene they had witnessed, swung their censers as accurately as ever, and the attendant priest also mumbled scraps of Latin which he dignified with the name of prayers, when Lucille walked after them with tears streaming over her pale features, yet no thought of rebelling against the cruel decision that tore her from her home had entered her heart.

In this she only practised that submission to the higher powers which the Huguenots sedulously inculcated in all things that did not conflict with their duty to the Supreme Ruler. Suddenly the strong arms of her father were thrown around her, and she was borne away as lightly and as easily as if she had been an infant.

Instinctively she clung to him and buried her head in his bosom to shut out the threats and anathemas uttered by the priests when they became aware of the daring act perpetrated by the peasant. Laval was deaf to them all; he sped backward without one glance toward his persecutor, who smiled with a malignant consciousness of the power he possessed to bring speedy vengeance upon him, and he quickened his pace that he might reach Nismes and send the myrmidons of the law to execute his will against the defenceless family. Laval reached his own door, and placing his daughter upon the floor, he sternly said,

"Now, Annette, let us make ready as quickly as we may to go out in the hills, for yon priest will lose no time in sending the dragoons to ferret us out. We must find a secure hiding-place before they come, or no sun will ever again rise on earth for you or me."

The mother cast a pitiful glance at the helpless infant she carried in her arms, but she said nothing. Laval understood the look, and his voice was slightly husky as he replied to it.

"He is a young sufferer in the cause of Christ; but he had better now perish in his innocence than be trained by priestly influence to become a persecutor of the faithful."

"Dear father," said Lucille, throwing herself upon her knees before him, "my weakness and disobedience has brought all this suffering upon you. Let me follow the priest, and avert his anger from you. I deserve the punishment, and I can bear it."

"Rise, my child, and help your mother to put up our scanty possessions. No evil to me could be so great as to suffer you to fall under the rule of that man. Comfort yourself, girl, for some pretext for tearing you from me would soon have been found, even if the innocent pastime of singing psalms in praise of our Creator had not afforded one to the wily priest."

Thus comforted, the poor girl, still trembling with agitation, followed her mother into the house: it consisted of two small rooms, divided by a plank partition, and contained such articles as were barely necessary to enable them to live; but all were neat and well-kept. A bundle of clothing and such food as the cottage contained were hastily collected, and rolled in the blankets from the beds.

These Laval tied with a cord and slung them over his shoulder, while his wife took the infant in her arms and prepared to follow him. With stern and bitter hearts they bade adieu to the home which had sheltered them so many years; and as Lucille passed out, she plucked a spray from the ivy that clustered over the poor walls, to be kept as a momento of her childhood's home.

They made their escape in time; for when they had ascended above the valley, the little party turned and looked back toward the spot occupied by their late home. Night by this time had fallen, and the red glare from a fire was thrown upon the darkened air. Laval pointed toward it and said,

"Behold, the priest has lost no time—our cottage is in flames!"

The pathway chosen by Laval, by which to escape from his enemies, was a narrow defile leading into the heart of the Black Mountains. Walls of rock hemmed it in on either side, and the road was encumbered with fragments which had fallen from the cliffs above, and obstructed their progress at every step. Laval well knew that they would be pursued; but he trusted for deliverance to the difficulty of mounted horsemen following the precipitous path he had preferred. He also knew many secret places in these mountain solitudes, in which a small party could conceal themselves, and elude any search that was not systematically and minutely made.

They had nearly reached a spur in the mountain road which jutted across the pathway, when the clatter of approaching hoofs was heard. The three paused, and Laval bent his head and listened attentively; he then spoke to the tremblers beside him in a calm tone,

"It is only one horseman who approaches. He comes slowly, as if weary or uncertain of his locality. Take the boy, Lucille, and you and your mother stand behind the projection of the hill there, while I watch the approach of this person, and see if he is to be feared."

They obeyed him in silence, and Laval stood erect, with his muscular form against the dark background afforded by a clump of cedars which grew from the crevices in the rocky wall. The road here had widened into a gap, and the starlit sky shone peacefully over it; they were above the region of night vapors, and the atmosphere was perfectly clear.

A pathway opened from the gap on the left hand, and from that side came the uneven sound of stumbling steps, evidently from a tired animal. Presently the head of a mule was seen, and soon his whole body appeared, panting with the fatigue of the ascent. A small man of very unwarlike aspect was mounted on him, and his mind was evidently occupied with thoughts which had little to do with his present "whereabout." He was crooning a portion of the thirty-third psalm.

Laval stepped forward, laid his hand on the bridle of the rapt singer, and with his sonorous voice repeated another verse from the same psalm.

Thus arrested, the rider seemed slightly startled, but he instantly resumed his composure as he looked upon the forester.

"Laval, are you too in hiding, my good man? You do not recognize me, though it is scarcely a year since I administered the rites of baptism to your infant son; at the imminent risk of being seized and imprisoned."

"My pastor! God be thanked that I meet you thus, for we are both in greater danger than you are aware of. Pardon my forgetfulness, but to-night I have had much to bewilder me. What brings you here, in the very lion's mouth in such perilous times as these?"

"My duty to my poor, suffering people. I must come at stated periods to see after their welfare, to give them such consolations as they sorely need, to keep stedfast the wavering, and show them how insignificant is all worldly suffering in comparison with the reward prepared for those who are faithful to the end."

Some strong emotion seemed to shake the soul of Laval, and he knelt upon the road, and reverently placing the thin hand of the pastor upon his own head, he said,

"Give me your blessing, father; and ask the Holy One, whose true evangelist you are, to give me a portion of your meek and long-suffering spirit. Oh! I need it—I need it this night, above all others of my life!"

With solemn earnestness, the blessing was given.

A few hundred yards from the spot on which they had met there was a narrow ravine, the entrance to which was nearly concealed by a low undergrowth of vines and bushes. Through this Laval led the way, holding back the matted branches that the mule might pass through without trampling down the natural screen, which served to conceal it from observation. After scrambling through this, a few paces beyond the ravine terminated in an abrupt precipice. The party paused, and the forester again parted the underwood on the right side, and revealed a pathway winding around the face of the hill that overhung an apparently interminable depth, from which vapors of darkness seemed to rise.

"Come, my good wife, I will help you on. The mule is sure-footed, and can be trusted to go on alone. Hark! there come the soldiers, by Heaven!"

Each one of the little party stifled their very breathing to listen to the clatter of horses' feet, as a party of mounted men swept over the road they had so lately left. They came to a sudden halt.

In another instant they dashed on, and Laval drew a long breath.

"There is no alternative now, Antoinette; you must go on or perish. Lucille, walk in your mother's steps while I sustain her."

His wife staggered up, nerved as much by the consciousness that her child must be followed at all hazards, as by a sense of the danger of remaining where she was. Her husband placed his strong arms around her, and guided her uncertain steps with a care unusual to him, glancing back every few moments to ascertain if his daughter followed his directions.

Lucille, with a courage and firmness worthy of her father, followed him closely, bravely repressing the tremulous pulsations of her heart, and keeping her eyes steadily fixed upon the guiding form in whose steps she walked.

The pathway ended as it began, in a gorge between the hills, which, after a few yards, seemed to enclose them on all sides. The party halted, and Laval lifted up a matted screen of wild vines that hung over the face of the cliff. It revealed an opening large enough to permit the mule without his rider to pass through. The pastor dismounted, and transferred the child to his mother.

"We shall find friends and shelter here," said Laval. "I will go before, and prepare those within for the appearance among them of others as unfortunate as themselves."

He bent his tall form, and was soon lost in the darkness beyond. In a few moments a glimmer of lurid light flashed through the opening, and the voice of the forester bade them enter. The pastor made the mother and daughter precede him, and followed, leading his mule.

The scene which there met their view was wild and fantastic beyond description. A lofty palace of weird and most grotesque architecture seemed to rise before their vision, lighted from various points by torches made of resinous woods, and placed in such a position as was most convenient for their owners.

Many groups were scattered over the large area whose appearance seemed to realize the story of the gnomes, though why they were permitted to intrude into this lighted hall, over which the spirit of beauty had thrown its most attractive spell, seemed a mystery. Haggard, hopeless-looking men, half starved women and children, with their clothing often in tatters, started forward to welcome the new-comers, in the hope that they brought assistance to them, for hitherto the presence of Laval in their midst had been for the purpose of bringing to them such scanty supplies of food as he could obtain without suspicion.

Collected there were thirty wretched refugees who had been beggared, driven from their homes, and threatened with imprisonment and the galleys if they did not renounce their religious belief. While living in the mountain fastnesses, with no shelter save the canopy of heaven, one of the persecuted sect had accidentally discovered the entrance to the cave, and there the hapless Huguenots found safety from their enemies amidst scenes of grandeur and loveliness that rivalled the proudest palace made by the skill of man.

The area of the hall measured several hundred feet, and the vaulted arch above, by the dim light, seemed to rise to infinity. Lofty pillars, cornices wreathed with snowy flowers, and walls covered with fantastic arabesques, looking as if formed of floating mist suddenly frozen into shapes of unimaginable beauty, bewildered the eye, and appealed to the imagination.

A wide arched portal, supported on either hand by colossal figures, led into an interior apartment, from which gleamed a faint light, revealing outlines of spectral images resembling a hall of statuary.

The pastor paused and looked upon the scene to which he had been so suddenly introduced. As the gaunt forms of its hapless occupants came crowding toward him, with words of welcome and recognition, and stretching forth his hands, he uttered a fervent prayer for the rescue and preservation of the hapless beings awaiting there the means of flying from their native land forever, glad to abandon every earthly possession if life and reason could be preserved.

A light form, with dishevelled hair and streaming eyes, glided from the shelter of a pillar, and Lucille threw herself before him, and clasped his knees.

"Oh, good pastor!" she tremulously said, "leave us not until you have obtained forgiveness for me from my father for the cowardly act which brought all this misery upon us. My heart is broken by having incurred his displeasure as well as that of my heavenly Father."

"Poor child, what can you have done which is considered so unpardonable?" asked the pastor.

"She has denied her Lord in the hour of temptation," replied Laval, sternly. "And although she is dearer to me than my own heart's blood, I feel that, in atonement for this sin, God will require of me the same sacrifice he demanded of Abraham. The only difference will be that mine must be consummated, while the patriarch only underwent a severe trial of his faith."

"What can you mean?" asked the pastor, as he gazed in surprise upon the gloomy brow and rapt expression of the forester.

"Only that I feel myself to be one chosen to a peculiar lot, and the future rises up before me a phantom of such horror as might freeze the blood in veins less fiery than mine. Within the past few hours a vision of prophecy has come upon me with a power I can not resist. I behold the long vista of woe that stretches before us ending in the dim futurity in an outpouring of blood that shall appal the nations of the earth, then will the retribution have fallen, and the destruction of my people be signally avenged. But—but the victim demanded of me will be my own precious one; and, shrink as I may, this right hand must hurl her to destruction."

He stretched forth his trembling hand, and placed it on the head of the frightened girl.

"Oh, father, you have not yet forgiven me!" she murmured. "Twice last night you were on the eve of taking my life, and now you express the same intention. Dear pastor, intercede for me, that he may pardon my great fault. I am young; I fear to die."

"Child," said her father, solemnly, "you are safe from me, unless the Great God demands the sacrifice of me; then it must be rendered. If we escape the snares of our enemies, I will pardon you with all my heart, and win forgiveness for your recantation from Him whose holy cause you denied. But, should it be ordered otherwise—should the dragoons circumvent us, I warn you to make your peace with God, for I will with my own hand destroy you, sooner than suffer you to fall into the power of those who have no mercy on us. Go, Lucille, and delay not the pastor; time is precious to him."

The pastor placed his hands upon her bowed head and blessed her. She then turned meekly toward her father, who seemed moved by a sudden impulse to snatch her to his heart.

Comforted by this assurance of his unabated affection, Lucille returned to her mother.

The morning found the inmates of the cave assembled in the hall of statues, for it was the Sabbath. Wan figures arose on all sides, with every variety of drapery flowing from their gigantic proportions. Seen by the flickering and imperfect light of a few scattered torches, they looked like a convention of antique sages, in their robes of state, collected there in solemn conclave to decide on some question of momentous import.

Near its centre arose an altar, of pure white, supported by a gigantic hand, that seemed to rise from the floor and grasp the slender shaft that rested upon it, as perfectly poised as if a skillful architect had adapted it to its position. On either hand floating drapery fell from it in folds of such airy delicacy as to seem ready to be displaced by a breath.

An open Bible rested upon the shaft, showing that it had already been appropriated as a place of worship by the refugees.

Laval, bewildered by the weird scene, passed on until they reached the farthest extremity of the vast hall. There an irregularly-shaped recess, about fifteen feet long and nearly as wide, was screened from observation by a falling sheet of stalactite, on which two figures in the act of embracing seemed rudely traced in the bas-relief. In this he found his wife and child, stretched upon a bed of dried leaves.

Madame Laval lay pale and exhausted, completely broken down by the mental anguish of the last few hours. The boy was sleeping quietly beside her, but it was evident that he, too, had suffered from the indisposition of his mother. Lucille sat beside them, holding the hand of Madame Laval in her own. It thrilled and trembled with nervous excitement, for in this phantom-hall she could only sleep while the warm clasp of her daughter assured her that some living and breathing form was near her.

Lucille looked inexpressibly sad. The shadow of a dark presentiment was on her, and she prayed for strength to fortify her child-soul for the moment of thrilling terror and fatal doom which arose as a dim, and undefined horror before her. Nature bestows upon a few of her children, of finer organization, a subtle instinct, which enables them vaguely to foreshadow the future—especially if that future be charged with clouds of evil; and to such belonged this young girl.

The approach of her father was felt before she saw him. For one brief instant her heart bounded with a glad welcome, and then sunk like a mass of lead in her bosom. A cold thrill sent its icy shiver through her veins, as he laid his hand upon her shoulder and called her by the pet name he bestowed upon her only in his blandest moods.

"Petite, you look almost as ghastly as those stone figures out there, and your mother seems as if she had been ill a month. Fie! this will never do. If we begin by despairing, how must it end with us?"

The girl raised her large sad eyes to his, and said,

"We feared for your safety; that is why we seem so downcast, father."

The sound of his voice aroused his wife from her half-dreaming state, and she languidly unclosed her eyes.

"Dear Jean, is that you? Oh, such a weight is lifted from my poor heart by your return! The baby is not well; and I believe, if I am compelled to stay in this dreadful place, with all those stony figures looking like ghosts, I shall die. They make me afraid. It seems like a place for the dead people that can't rest in their graves."

The stern soul of Laval, moved by such a whirwind of emotion as had lately swept through it, could find little sympathy for this species of nervous terror; the querulous tones of his wife's voice annoyed him, and he hastily said,

"Annette, in the time of health and strength the words of living truth, taught you from your infancy, were never doubted; and now, in the imbecility of fear and sickness, they shall not be. Cast those doubts away, I command you, and ask of Christ forgiveness for having harbored them. Even this trial of faith may come to you, Annette; and should you then prove untrue—should you even waver, then may God help you, for I never will. I will cast you from me as a worthless weed, no longer worthy of a place in the heart of a man who deserves the name. I pardoned the child because she is young and timid; but you—you, the wife of my bosom, the mother of my children—oh, it is very, very different!" and the stern voice faltered with emotion.

Madame Laval was roused from her supineness by this impassioned appeal. She clasped his hands in both her own, and said,

"It was the doubt of a moment. I *do* believe, Jean, with all my heart; and I promise you that I will perish before I will prove untrue to the faith by which I have lived."

Torches were brought in, and disposed in such a manner as to throw the glare of light upon the space immediately around the altar. Then the most singular and interesting portion of this exquisite work of nature became visible. Suspended above it was an irregular canopy, crowned by a broken mitre, from which a dove was springing forth with outstretched wings, as if ready to soar heavenward, yet held down, wounded and partially crushed by the weight of the ecclesiastical crown from which it had failed to escape.

"Behold the visible emblem of our faith, struggling to rescue itself from the fangs of Rome!" said

M. Lefevre, pointing upward. He entered the unique pulpit, and opened the service by reading a portion of Scripture. He then gave out the opening lines of one of the soul-stirring hymns sung by the Huguenots in their places of worship. His voice was one of fine power, and he commenced the strain himself. The others joined in; and those hidden in different parts of the cavern, who had not yet been informed of what was going on, took it up as they came winding through the dim arcades toward the illuminated point near the centre.

The thrilling anthem echoed through the vast dome, and seemed to die away in depths yet unexplored. The singers involuntarily paused, at the close of each verse, and listened to the fading strain, sounding as if a seraph-band had caught each cadence as it arose, and were wafting it away, away to the spirit-land.

A picture for an artist gifted with the highest inspiration of genius would that striking scene have made. The men, with their wasted and strongly-marked features and worn vestments, leaning in every variety of attitude against the gigantic forms that cast their shadows around; the women and children, grouped together on the floor—many of the former possessing a delicate beauty which showed that hardship was new to them—and the infant faces looking up with awe-struck expression to the white-haired man, who spoke to them of "a home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," where persecution nor want should ever reach them.

At the close of the sermon the choral hymn again arose, and amidst its dying echoes the benediction was given.

A thrilling cry suddenly broke the impressive sounds of M. Lefevre's voice, and horror-struck faces revealed that they were surrounded by a cordon of soldiers, who had noiselessly approached, and now stood with levelled muskets and glaring eyes, ready to pour destruction in the midst of the helpless and unarmed groups before them.

That cry was the signal; each dragoon had taken deadly aim at his intended victim, and a simultaneous discharge carried death to nearly every manly heart in that assembly; while women and children received ghastly wounds, compared with which death would have been mercy. There were flying forms, and wild shrieks, and cries for mercy, that were never hearkened to by the ruthless murderers.

Utter extermination, except to the pastor and Laval, had been their orders, and well did they execute them. So securely had their measures been taken, that not one escaped to the numerous hiding-places afforded by such a place as the cave; and perhaps it was a mercy that they did not, for there they must have perished by the wasting tortures of famine.

The first discharge had covered Laval with blood. The desire to take the forester alive caused so conspicuous a mark to be passed by; his wife and daughter stood in such positions beside him, that it was impossible to aim accurately at either of them without danger to him; thus they all escaped the murderous fire, save the infant. A bullet glanced and broke his arm; the frantic mother snatched him from his father's arms, and fell fainting with terror.

The wretched man stooped to lift them again that he might at least die in the attempt to protect them, when a fierce grasp was laid on his shoulder, and a voice said,

"You we are commissioned to make prisoner."

At that instant a cry was heard that vibrated to the inmost soul of the father; and with the fury of a baited tiger he dashed aside the hand that would have held him, and, bounding over the dead and dying, reached his daughter just as a dragoon was laying his rude grasp upon her.

To dash him aside, snatch her to his breast, and fly toward the opening leading to the hills, was the work of a brief moment. Three soldiers started in pursuit; but Laval, burdened as he was, outstripped them all—for he was nerved by desperation; to escape with her, or to destroy her himself, was his stern resolution; though he felt as if the clutch of a fiend was on his heart as the terrible thought passed through it.

The outlet was open, for the sentinel had heard the discharge of fire-arms, and hastened to ascertain its cause. Appalled by the scene that met his view, he fled over the hill-side to meet imprisonment from the dragoons who guarded the ravine.

Hotly pursued, the forester rushed through the opening, and gained the edge of the precipice. Two soldiers were on the path in front of him, and he saw there was no escape. He turned his face for one instant toward those who followed him; it was livid, and his hair bristled upon his head like one in mortal fright. His daughter lay helpless upon his breast, and it was evident that terror had rendered her insensible to what was passing.

The grasp of his pursuers was already upon the garments of Laval; their curses were ringing in his ears, when his voice arose with such fearful agony in its tones that even those hardened men recoiled:

"My God! to save her, thou knowest this is all that is left me!" And with a frantic impulse he threw the helpless form over the yawning chasm. One of the dragoons clutched at her dress, and there was an instant of breathless horror; then the garment yielded, and to save himself from losing his footing on the edge of the precipice, the man relaxed his grasp, and the slight form of Lucille went down—down, while her father stood paralyzed by the deed he had thus been forced to commit, with rigid frame and stony eyes, an image of despair in its most terrible aspect.—*From the Huguenot Exiles, published by Harper Brothers.*

A RIDE ON SERVICE.

A THRILLING INCIDENT.

It was a splendid summer evening, and the moon was shining out from the sky, bright as if, like a fortunate general, she never knew what it was to be behind a cloud. But wherever she smiled, it was on few pleasanter spots than one of those half valleys, half slopes, which form so agreeable a feature of South African scenery, where the gracefully undulating ground is covered—not too closely—with clumps of trees and flowering shrubs, so picturesquely grouped that one might have fancied wealth had been expending itself there in park-adornment, only that so much taste would never be displayed by man's decorating hand.

But the moon shone also on other objects less in harmony with the peaceful valley than gleaming leaves or drooping blossoms; for brightly her rays were falling on piled arms and military accoutrements, which flashed up to her recollections of strife and bloodshed. And scarlet uniforms moved in and out among the greenwood, and around the fires which flung the glow of their red flames upon the moonlight.

It was, in short, the bivouac of a detachment of British—I mean *white*—troops, *en route* from head-quarters to their destined post on the extreme frontier. We did not belong to the party, but, journeying also "under orders," had halted in the valley some time previous to the arrival of the detachment, which had been tempted to bivouac there by the same attraction as ourselves—a spring of sweet fresh water, a luxury which South African travellers of every class soon learn to prize, as muddy ponds are the ordinary substitutes for fountains.

As one or two of the officers belonging to the detachment were old acquaintances, we were not sorry for the rencontre; so joined our travelling dinners pic-nic fashion, and spent a pleasant evening there in the soft moonlight, listening to many a tale of hair-breadth escape and bygone adventure, with which a soldier's stirring life had stored the memory of some of our companions.

Most were of distant scenes and places, which was noticed and laughed at by the tellers themselves, as giving room for suspicion that they guarded against all contradictory evidence.

"Or," I suggested, "that South Africa does not afford the materials for any adventure worth recording."

"Not that, at all events," replied one who had hitherto been a listener; "for I can say, for my own part, that the most critical day of my life was spent not a hundred miles from here."

"I have heard of that," said another. "It is a good story, Morden, tell it to us."

"Yes, do!" echoed half a dozen voices.

"But I am a bad story-teller."

"So much the better; you'll tell it all the more straightforward, as the reviews at home say of an unliterary traveller."

"So, finding no excuse would be admitted, Lieutenant Morden began his story:

"It was two or three years ago, during ordinary Kaffir weather—that is to say, there were no thunder clouds of war darkening the sky, but for all that the black shadows of Kaffir marauding parties were flitting across it whenever they had a good opportunity. The fact is, the Kaffirs, as usual, stole cattle whenever they could; and some daring fellows had just made off with a fine herd belonging to a frontier farmer, after wounding both the herdsmen. Troops were of course ordered off from the nearest point, to endeavor to recover the plunder, and obtain compensation for the outrage. Accordingly, Grant, of ours, stationed at a small post across the Rhei Kops River, received orders to undertake the duty with the greatest portion of his detachment.

"That is to say, the orders were despatched to him, but they were scarcely gone, when an express arrived with the intelligence that Grant had that morning been thrown from his horse, and so severely hurt that the sergeant had sent as quickly as possible for medical assistance. But the doctor could not be laid hands upon at once, as he was gone to visit another of our small outstanding posts.

"This deprived me of a pleasant companion; for I was ordered off immediately to take the duty in Grant's place, and endeavor to teach the offending Kaffirs the worth of their misdeeds. Few minutes did for preparation, and I was soon in the saddle. Then came shaking hands with brother officers, and kind wishes—and I was off.

"Though belonging to a white regiment, I had, of course, a Hottentot soldier as escort, a smart little fellow, who, if he barely reached my elbow, looked as if his keen eyes could pierce half a mile further than mine into a mass of jungle. They were always darting about in every direction, looking for something suspicious. It seemed a positive pleasure to him when some Kaffirs were visible on a large flat we were crossing.

"'Three Kaffirs, sur, and dey got plenty assegais.'

"I could see the Kaffirs plain enough, but nothing of the assegais. However Piet stuck to it that they had them, and afterwards that they were hiding them—of which I saw nothing either. I rode up to them, and found they had a pass quite according to rule for entering the colony. They were unarmed, and when I charged them with having weapons, denied it with the most perfect assumption of injured innocence, yet there was a look about one which made me feel that Piet was right and I was wrong. But I had no time to waste in investigation, so rode on.

"Piet's next report was far less to his own satisfaction.

"'De paard's foot sore, sur. De horse 'im lame.'

"'Nonsense!' I replied, but it was no nonsense. We walked the horse to and fro. Lame he was decidedly; we examined the foot, but could not discover the cause of mischief. He was dead lame, there was no question about the matter. And there was no question either as to what was to be done. Piet had to lead the animal slowly back to the fort, while I went on alone.

"In a little while I heard a shot fired, at no great distance on one hand; but took no heed of it, supposing—as proved afterwards to be the case—that it proceeded from some young men, settlers' sons, &c., on one of their frequent coursing parties.

"I had not, however, gone twenty yards further before I saw a splendid tiger—

"Now, Carson," said Morden, checking himself, "you need not break in with your natural history. We all know that, strictly speaking, it is a leopard, not a tiger, that we have in South Africa. But the animals are so universally called tigers, that I should feel quite awkward in trying to speak of them by another name.

"Well, as I said, I had not ridden twenty yards, before I saw a splendid tiger, the finest I ever saw in South Africa, break cover some distance in front. As these animals, though they can be terribly fierce when irritated, are seldom the first to commence hostilities, I was surprised to see him advance straight towards me as if to do battle. Then I suddenly recollected that only one of my barrels was furnished with ball, the other being loaded merely with small shot, which in the hurry of preparation I had forgotten. I now levelled, and took as steady aim with the useful barrel at the fellow as his rapid movements allowed, and fired.

"He was hit, somewhere about the chest I thought, but it only checked him for a moment; then he rushed at me like a gigantic wild cat as he was, with his eyes burning and his teeth bristling. His claws—I did not see them, but I knew well what like they were.

"The remaining barrel was worth no more than a handful of sand, but I resolved to face it out. The brute was close upon me, so I seized my gun by the barrel, and, whirling it round my head, was prepared to deal the rascal such a blow as might, I hoped, cure him of coming to such close quarters.

"But my horse was not in my councils, and calculating possibly that his face might be clawed more readily than mine, he at this very moment wheeled half round, and galloped away as if something even worse than a tiger was behind him.

"This mad flight had not lasted a minute, when I did not require the horse's cry of pain and terror—and every one who has heard knows how horrible that is—to tell me what had happened. The tiger had sprung upon us, and while the claws of his left fore paw were fixed in the flank of my unfortunate horse, those of his right were plunged deep into my own side.

"For one instant my four-footed comrade in suffering seemed paralysed; but the next he sprang into the air like an antelope, then whirled round and round like a teetotum, and then darted off like a rocket, kicking up his heels as perhaps horse never kicked before. All this occupied but a few seconds, and by the time I had got over the first shock of the tiger-grip, we were scouring a rugged flat with death-spurred speed.

"I now discovered that the tiger had, luckily for me, made an awkward leap of it. He had miscalculated his distance, and instead of being seated very comfortably behind me, he merely held on by his murderous claws, while half his body hung over the tail of the horse, and his hind legs were one moment flourishing wildly in the air and the next scarifying the legs of the poor horse, in their vain efforts to obtain a footing, which my steed's mad kicking and plunging prevented for the time; but that could not last long.

"But where, you will ask, was the savage beast's delicate teeth all this while? So I asked myself, when my first expectation of having my spine bitten right through was agreeably disappointed. There was such a wonderful fumbling, and snorting, and growling, and crunching, and tugging, behind me, that it was a minute or two before I understood it.

"But when I did, what a glorious idea it was! bringing with it the first little doubt of becoming the tiger's dinner which had visited me. I had got into a habit of carrying my spare ammunition—powder, bullets, shot of different sizes, in short anything I did not want at hand—slung in a strong cartouche-box behind me, soldier fashion. At this the tiger made a grab, fierce enough to crash through both leather and tin (for it was so lined), and when he found the unsavory morsel not to his taste, he was so jammed by the teeth, that he could not as yet extricate his jaws to employ them more pleasingly on my flesh and blood.

"So there he was, crunching and champing, but for how long? And there was the maddened horse cutting the maddest of capers, and trying his best to fling both me and the common enemy from his back, dashing furiously over any sort of ground, and taking leaps such as only an animal so spurred on by pain and terror could have taken.

"And now the tiger tore his claws out from my side, but only for an instant, to enable him to plunge them, in tender embrace, further round my waist. Was this a proof that he was progressing? In situations of this kind one minute is like ten, and all this takes much longer to tell than to occur, but how fully and painfully you seem to live through each long-drawn instant. Thank God, such moments cannot last long! Now every thought was busy with the question—what to do? To turn round and face the tiger, so close as we then were, would, I felt, be certain death; and to throw myself off was, I found, impossible, he held me so tightly in his loving embrace.

"What was to be done? Just at this moment, as my infuriated steed was executing one of his maddest pranks on the edge of a rugged hill, I espied the dark waters of Rhei Kops River at no great distance. At once the idea flashed on me, if I could reach it before I was converted into a luncheon. I at once seized the reins with a master's hand, for hitherto the agonized animal had had it all his own way, as I knew he was, for the time, doing the best for both of us. But now I touched the reins in a way he knew must be obeyed, and turning his head towards the river, away he dashed 'over brake, brook, and scaur,' faster than ever the Wild Huntsman rushed through the night.

"All, or much, depended on the horse's speed. If he could gain the water before the furious brute behind me had shaken his jaws free of the cartouche-box, there was a chance; but, perhaps, all our necks might be broken first. I did not much care. I wondered whether the more uniform pace of the horse would favor the tiger's desire to ascend to closer companionship, but my flying steed still kept kicking about his heels in a marvellous style; and, besides, it struck me that his mishap with the cartouche-box engaged the most of the tiger's attention, or he would have accomplished that feat before this.

"Then what a tug the fellow gave me, and what a blow, as he shook his head with a ferocious growl! I thought it would have knocked me forward, but no! the strong clasp of those lacerating nails kept me steady. At last the Rhei Kops was in full view, some twenty yards in front. I knew that it was very deep there, and that the current was very strong, but so much the better—anything was preferable to the kind of death before, or rather behind, me. Another second and we reached the brink of the canal-like stream, and full time too, for at the same instant I heard something which convinced me that the tiger had at length got his dental weapons ready for action.

"But the horse required no urging to take the water; in he plunged at once. In a moment he was beyond his depth, then he struck out to swim, and *then* for the success of my experiment. As I have said, the current was both strong and rapid, and though I kept my horse's head up stream as much as possible, to gain all the advantage of the water, it swept us down at an amazing rate. And then my adjunct set up a snorting, and a spluttering, and a gurgling, as if the water incommoded him. I looked over my shoulder, and there I saw him striving hard to keep his nose above water, not to much purpose, for every instant a fresh splutter and gurgle attested failure.

"Yet amid his choking, the pertinacious brute was still trying to scramble further up. I gave the rein such a furious jerk, that it brought the horse's head up in the air, with a blow on my own forehead—prepared though I was—that half stunned me; but it also brought my steed into nearly an upright position, and completely submerged master tiger.

"I heard gurgling and puffing worse than ever, and I jerked the rein again to keep matters so. The horse was, I felt, giving up swimming, he was turning with the current, but I should not then have minded being drowned. There was a struggle behind me, the fierce nails were clenched with agonizing movement in my flesh, and I dare say my poor dumb comrade might have said 'ditto.' Then they were torn out painfully from my lacerated side, and then—O welcome sight!—I saw the tiger swimming for himself, with his head above water.

"I immediately threw myself from the saddle to try my own fortune and let my poor exhausted horse have the best chance I could give him of saving his life. In a minute I saw him carried down the stream, floundering helplessly in the very centre. Just afterwards the tiger passed me, going also with the current, and looking very little at his ease in the ungenial element.

"But now I had enough to do to think of myself, and whether—albeit the distance was not great—I should succeed in gaining shore. For the Rhei Kops is at all times a strong current, and when, as then, swollen to its brim by recent rains among the mountains, is sufficiently dangerous, and no one in his senses—unless tiger-driven—would dare to attempt it at an unfordable spot. But I was a good swimmer; yet, with my utmost exertions, I calculated I drifted a fathom for every foot I won towards the land. I was rather embarrrassed, 'tis true, by my gun, which I could not think of relinquishing. Perhaps some remembrance of the tiger had a share in my reluctance; besides it was the last gift from a dear friend, who sleeps beneath the shadow of the Syrian trees, and I could not part with it, clog though it was on my exertions.

"So I struggled on. Many a time I thought it was uselessly—that the current would overpower me at last, and that obscure stream close over my latest sigh. But my presence here is sufficient proof that it did not; though it was only after a long and desperate struggle, that, weary and exhausted, I at length scrambled up the rugged bank,—how far below the point where we first touched the Rhei Kops, is more than I can say.

"I was so utterly done up, that all I wished for was to crawl to some place where I might lie down and rest—or die, and the wet state of my garments would have rendered the latter very likely. But I had scarcely had time to breathe out my first pantings of fatigue and suffering, when I saw something that sent at once a glow—more (odd as it may seem) of indignation than any other feeling—through my frame. But it was like a positive insult to see that tiger standing there confronting me only at a few yards' distance. Miserable and half drowned he looked, but his eyes were still glowing and burning, as if with the thought that a comfortable meal would recruit him after his misadventures.

"I glanced round quickly. Steep and stern the hill rose behind me, forbidding all thought of climbing, even with leisure. But I was now on more equal terms with the savage brute than I had been before, and I seemed to care little that there was no avenue for escape if my first blow should fail.

"The tiger crept stealthily forward a few paces, with his fiery eyeballs steadily fixed on me. Then, with a low, deep-mouthed growl, he sprang upon me. I stood ready with the gun, now useful only as a bludgeon. It had made a good circuit in the air, and now went bang against the tiger's head, as he made his spring, and dashed him on his side.

"What a horrible howl of pain ran along the river bank! But though a good deal stunned, and his skull, I am sure, considerably fractured, the tiger was not killed, but immediately began to rouse himself to renew the combat. The gun, however, was fractured to more purpose, splintered right down to the lock. But with the barrel I succeeded in giving him two or three more blows which brought him down again, and then, my knife, and finding the jugular vein, ended the battle; though, ere the victory was gained, I had many more lacerating scratches from my dying foe than I would willingly have counted on.

"And then, when it was all over, the fatigue and pain, which a moment before had seemed vanished, rushed back upon me, and utterly overpowered, I sank down on the rough earth and stones. How long I might have lain there I do not know; but I dare say, our senior ensign would have had cause to bless the tiger, had it not been for the timely arrival of two Hottentot soldiers, who were out on leave to shoot buffaloes, and who, hearing the tiger's strange howl, came to see what was the matter. After doing their best for me there, one of them sped back to the fort with the news; and before nightfall I was back in my own quarters, safe but not very sound. But the recovery of the cattle of which I was ordered in search, and the punishment of the outrage, were subjects forgotten in two or three subsequent Kaffir offences, before I had recovered the combined effects of fatigue, chill, and clawing.

"But the tiger skin is a magnificent one; I sent it home, where understand, it occupies a place of honor, as it deserves. In removing the skin, it was discovered that another bullet had hit him before mine. This had been the shot I heard, and the cause that enraged him to the pitch of attacking me."

A MOUNTAIN STREAM.

"They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy."

I saw an Alpine rivulet careering
From rock to rock along its downward track,
When, mindful of the dangers it was nearing,
I whispered, "Back,
Back, streamlet, to thy mother, yon grey mountain;
Though glaciers fill the hollows of her breast,
Her freezing kiss alone can give a fountain
Safety and rest."
The river murmured, "False and empty warning;
For though my youth was cradled in the snow,
I sprung from dew-drops in the starry morning,
And there I go."
Again I said, "But why this march incessant,
Which will not stay to dally with the flowers?
'Twere well to learn how pure, and yet how pleasant,
Are bridal hours.
Lo, where the trailing tresses of a willow
Are tremulous with love she dreads to own;
Lie down in peace upon her yielding pillow—
'Twill prove a throne."
To which the brook: "A primrose for a minute
Dimpled my cheek with her caressing hand;
I leaped the bank, no primrose there was in it,
But weeds and sand.
And thus I learnt that 'tis a lying vision
Which paints the beauties of the treacherous shore,
A loving heart embittered by derision
Thus loves no more."
My answer was: "'Tis wise to shrink from wooing
When frailness bends, earthrooted yet above.
That primrose lured thee to her own undoing,
Buried in love.
But purest loveliness art thou rejecting,
Whose rays descend, and yet are throned on high.
Methinks 'twere joy indeed to sleep reflecting
The stars and sky."
The river sighed, "One night the moon delayed me,
Till on my breast her beams were multiplied.
Uprose my very depths, yet she betrayed me—
A maddening bride;
For soon there came an eddying, turbid feeling,
And from my destined path a torrent broke,
Till through the thorny hedgerows wildly reeling,
At length I woke
To know that safety is the twin of duty;
And that the wayworn pilgrims of a night
May only rest where self-existent beauty
Sheds solar light."
"And yet," I said, "'twere wise to cease from flowing
Which leads thee onward to a deadly leap,
A dark abyss, for thou art blindly going
Down to the deep."
"No!" moaned the river, "though I hear that ocean,
And see afar its angry billows foam,
It only breeds in me a fond emotion—
A thirst for home.
My home, not on the hills nor sea, but yonder,
Where joy untiring hushes weary care;
There, up the sunbuilt arches, I shall wander,
Lighter than air,
Until I join those crystal waves which sever
Earth from the Rock of Ages and the throne.
There murmuring waters rest in peace for ever,
And there alone."

THINGS WE TALK ABOUT.

—We have no Art Gallery worthy such a name—but it is a want we individually care little for. We confess to a dislike for pictures in masses or groups—with all the confusion of color and form, and all the bewildering glitter of showy frames and dazzling gas lights. We prefer isolated pictures with harmonious surroundings. We like to step into Williams & Stevens', or Goupil's little shut-off closets, where usually some fine production is hung, with proper care as to light, and careful avoidance of everything distracting or conflicting in effect. Here one can sit quietly and calmly, and with *real* pleasure examine and take in the beauties of the picture before him. Some of the pleasantest hours we have ever passed before the canvas, have been spent in these places. Landseer's, Vernet's, Delaroche's, and Fraed's, finest efforts have honored them. Recently at Goupil's we had "Marie Antoinette before the Revolutionary Tribunal"—one of the noblest and ablest historical paintings the country has ever seen. At the same time Cole's celebrated series of the "Voyage of Life" were open to inspection at Williams & Stevens' and at either place could be seen an engraving of Fraed's last production—Longfellow's Evangeline. It is much to be regretted that the original of this picture was not sent over. It is a beautiful conception, one that could only have sprung from the brain of a poet, and does us, as well as Longfellow, immeasurable service, in heightening and deepening our apprciation and love of the poem. Whoever reads Evangeline with this sweet ideal of the heroine in his mind's eye, will find a profounder pleasure in its perusal than he otherwise could have done. Could Art do more than this? Has it a higher aim?

We like to go about, and we do go about, picking out pictures that please us. They turn up at times in odd places, and obscure places. But very frequently some rare gem for a brief period makes its appearance in a Broadway window, unheeded by the crowd that rushes by. We have noted down several that have arrested our attention.

For some months, though we believe now removed, there hung in one shop window, "The last Supper of the Girondists." This was a remarkably fine picture, with a peculiar and effective management of light, and a grouping of figures full of dramatic power, expression, and contrast. You saw those men who went singing and rejoicing to the guillotine—the jest was on their lips, which the awful shadow of the coming moment could not dissipate. Their reckless, even sublime, philosophy gleamed from their eyes. One or two were sinking for a moment under a flitting sadness—their fingers relaxing the grasp of the wine cup—some dream of youth, of broken and shattered hopes clouding for an instant their unnatural mirth, but you looked to see the vain sentiment disappear, and the song break from their lips again. The painter we do not know.

In Goupil's window hung, or hangs, a crayon sketch by Darley. No American's collection can be considered satisfactory without one of Darley's sketches. What a pity it is that his genius is thrown away (in every sense but a pecuniary one) upon bank note designs, when productions like the one above, if more frequent, would give him fame, wide, universal, deep. The sketch we speak of is a rural one full of Darley's peculiarly charming touches.

In another window, near Bond street, is a little water-color landscape, not much bigger than our magazine page, which we never pass without stopping to take one more look. It pleases us exceedingly.

In Smith's engraving room, Ann street, near Broadway, hangs a Crucifixion, by Crull, so said, who flourished near about two hundred years ago. We are in the habit of stopping occasionally to look at this picture as it is one that we have always admired. The artist we know nothing of, but in our poor judgment, such as it is, we consider this production eminently fine in many particulars, and if we could afford to be a virtuoso should certainly add it to our collection. Mr. Smith has in his rooms, in addition to the above, several curious and interesting works of art, such as rare engravings, &c.

At Williams & Stevens' the latest exhibitions are "The Order of Release," an engraving from a work by the celebrated pre-Raphaelite painter, Millais, and two productions from the pencil of the poet-artist, Buchanan Reed, "The Lost Pleiad," and "The Knight bearing off Undine." These pictures of Mr. Reed's while open to criticism in several particulars, present many claims to our admiration. Undine is marked by warm, rich-toned color, but the composition of the picture does not altogether please us. The Lost Pleiad is in a dreamy, poetic style, in its details full of exquisite grace and feeling, but the dense blue of its background strangely mars its effect as a whole. *A propos* of Mr. Reed, we are glad to perceive that the London Athenæum has given a laudatory review of "The House by the Sea," and concludes its remarks by saying: "We may congratulate America on the advent of another poet destined to share the laurels of Longfellow and Bryant."

Before leaving this art subject let us say a word or two in behalf of the very beautiful design by Mr. Dallas which we take pride in presenting to our readers in this number of the magazine—"Flowers and Thorns." Mr. Dallas is an artist who is rapidly attaining a position second only to the great Darley. He has fine creative talent, and a genius strongly tending in the poetic and allegorical direction, which this picture of "Flowers and Thorns" sufficiently indicates. We have seen in his studio several designs of a similar character, and we are confident that he needs but to give publicity to this vein (Pencil-poems we might call them), to at once obtain for him a general and wide recognition as a master in this branch of art effort.

—From the contemplation of Art subjects let us turn our glass of observation upon life—for the study of life, after all, is the greatest of studies, and we have no sympathy for that dilettanteism which reserves all its ecstasies for the "counterfeit presentment" of things, and has neither eye nor ear for the things themselves. To true taste and true cultivation every scene is a gallery, which the eye divides, combines, and sets in pictures. And these pictures, these fragments of beauty, that lie about us everywhere, whether only in a shifting cloud, in the fall of a ray of light, in the play of shadow, in the chance picturesqueness of a street scene, or the coming together of fine or effective contrasts, are abundantly evident to the artist-eye of an appreciative observer. There is many a pretty scene which town walks afford—many a little, pleasant, gem-like setting—if we have only the philosophy and the wisdom to find them out. If when we walk abroad we will consent to forget ourselves—our grand schemes, our plans of aggrandizement, our self-pleasures—to let the central sun of self around which we so complacently gather and dispose the rest of mankind, for a brief period to hide his light, and leave us only the eyes to see what others do, it would be wise and well. We like that nature which gathers in rich stores by its "penny of observation," to which life is a grand old drama, where every episode, however insignificant to the whole, has its own strong interest—that nature which looks out upon life with genial charity and modest self-abnegation. We see such a one in our mind's eye now. His capacious white vest folds voluminously over his big heart, and his nankeen pantaloons, "a world too wide," hang loosely about his limbs. Key and seal dangle at his fob; a hat, broad brimmed, shades his greyish locks. A blue coat with sleeves down to his finger nails; a white neckcloth; a stick, crooked and awry, but a time-honored companion. He walks slowly and looks to the right and left. He stops to pat an urchin's curly head, to look at some portrait finely set in the frame work of a window, to admire the pretty faces of roguish school girls, to laugh at the antics and tricks of frolicksome lads, to gaze (O unfashionable!) in the showy and tempting shop windows. He pauses in the square to watch the shadows on the grass, or to chuckle cherub little ones in nurses' arms. There is no beauty he will not note—no façe into which he will not look with kindliness and interest. The beggar's thin hand closes upon his gifts; the weary-hearted as they sweep by catch his quick glance of sympathy, and bear it with them.

This is the kind of a man we like—the happiest and the noblest—better than genius or talent advancing only Self—better than wealth pampering only Self—better than Power which is bitter, or Fame, which even while it feeds, stimulates the appetite, and leaves the pursuer always hungered and up-stretching for more!

—The theatres are flourishing. Even the summer solstice, which usually seals their doors, has been unable this season to keep the dramatic light under its bushel, and brick walls flame in the hot sun with showy announcements of treats passing and promised. Wallack's, for a brief season, has been opened by Bourcicault and charming Miss Robertson, with a new dog-day sponsorial appellative, "The Summer Garden." Honest country folk might scratch their heads and puzzle their simple brains in an attempt to reconcile the fitness of this title, but we citizens used to "Castle Garden," and "Niblo's Garden, without a vestige of greenery about either, will accept the name in behalf of the few pots of flowers and shrubs with which Mr. Bourcicault has adorned the place. Miss Robertson is a charming and delightful actress; and if we have not yet seen her during this engagement, it is because we recollect Wallack's as an exceedingly warm place, and we haven't faith enough in names to believe ourselves less susceptible of the melting mood, under even the cooling influence of "Summer Garden" in big letters.

John Brougham, the brilliant and delightful, has absolutely gone over to the Bowery—where he will be sure of making money, if nothing else. He has renovated the structure, put a first-rate stock company on its boards, and means to give the theatre a better reputation than it has recently borne. He will succeed.

We went recently to see the Marsh juvenile troupe. We advise our readers *not* to do likewise. In the first place, juvenile theatricals is wrong in the abstract; in the second place, the performances of this company are bad. Bad taste and bad judgment control them. The children appear to have been carefully educated in the worst style of the worst theatres. They strut and spout in a puny, unintelligible, and unendurable imitation of the noisy bow-wow school of acting, disdaining nature and common sense; and their plays are selected from the most degraded specimens of low melo-drama, audaciously dubbed "moral." What are we to think of innocent little girls acting "*The Six Degrees of Crime!*" Master Marsh has some cleverness, but he has been taught the winking, face-making, and contortions of East side comedians, until he is fairly spoiled.

Charming Laura Keene, it is said, will have a new theatre. Buckley's new structure, it is gossipped, is likely to be bought for her. Laura wants a small theatre. Vaudevilles, and the trifles she performs, are better adapted to a small building than so vast a place as the *Varieties*. If she succeed in obtaining Buckley's, surrounded by a good company, with new, spirited, brilliant comediettas, she would soon be at the head of as popular and agreeable a place of theatrical resort as any in our city. We hope to see it. Laura Keene ought to be encouraged. She is a brilliant woman, and is the mistress of exactly that school of acting which we trust to see supersede the old, stilted, stalking style—the school of nature.

Mr. Fleming has opened Burton's Theatre for a summer season, but with heavy plays, and we fear inadequate attendance. Mr. Fleming is a gentleman of fine talent, whom we should like to see permanently located in New York.

—It is absurd to confine the infirmities of Justice to mere blindness—she is lame, deaf, and insensible. She is a laggard, who comes halting and limping slowly up—behind the age, common sense, and her sister principles of Truth and Mercy. She is in rags. Her scales have false weights, she knows the ring of gold, and will smell it out with unerring instinct. She sold herself to Quibble, Trick & Co., long ago. There is one little act of justice which a certain class have long demanded—which any child (but the offspring of a lawyer) could see the equity of, which is so clear and simple that merely to state the question carries conviction, and yet wise legislators, wise judges, and wise jurists fuddle the matter bravely, and shroud it with their awful arms to the utter exclusion of a ray of common sense. Some few years ago a wiseacre decided that the acting of a play was not the infringement of the copyright, because it was merely a public reading and not a publication of the work. Everybody, excepting Messrs. Quibble, Trick, & Co., knows that to all intents and purposes, and in fact, the acting of a play *is* the publication of it—that it is usually the only publication for which a play is designed—that the law in spirit and meaning (though not technically) ought to and does cover this, as well as all other modes of publication. But Quibble can't see it. Quibble disdains the meaning of things—the object of things. Quibble studies words. Quibble thinks that laws are framed especially for him to find loopholes in them, and for nothing else. But as Quibble is a potent personage in our courts, as he sits on the bench, upheld by all the satellites of law, it is necessary for the dramatist to go to law-makers and not law-expounders for a solution to his difficulty. He asks the addition of a single line to the law already existing, which shall simply and authoritatively declare that the acting of a play is the publication thereof in the spirit and meaning of the act. But time passes by and even this is not done. Senators, who are supposed to possess a fair degree of intelligence, are importuned to assist this simple but important act of justice—but still it lags, halts, and possibly in the pressure of more important matters, such as a duel or so, it will be lost sight of altogether.

Does the reader understand this question? Suppose he writes a comedy which Mr. Wallack undertakes to produce. He wishes to publish it in pamphlet form because successful plays always sell—and he wishes moreover to be enabled to dispose of the right to act it to various managers throughout the country—for provincial managers are always eager for a play which has received the stamp of a New York audience. But he suddenly finds himself checkmated. If he publishes, managers have the legal right to act (i. e. publicly read) his production, *wilhe nilhe*, and he can do nothing but submit with what grace he can. Or if he does not publish, the managers, if sufficiently tempted by the success of the play, will attempt to gain possession of copies illegally, by a reporter and short hand, by treacherous prompters, by the theatre copyist, in all of which ways the thing has been frequently done—for, no matter how obtained, *stolen or not*, the poor author cannot prevent his property being used in any way these magnates of the stage choose, because it's all a mere public reading, and no infringement of his copyright. Can injustice be more clear than this? And yet up to this day the dramatist has been enabled to obtain no redress. Of course, in the face of these things authors can't and won't write dramas, unless, which is rarely the case, the profit from a single theatre gives promise of adequately remunerating him for his labor. Justice *may* some day arrive to a sense of the peculiar evil existing in this matter—but while we hope we strongly doubt it.

—SCHEMES to relieve Broadway of its crowd of travel are continually urged upon our citizens through the daily papers, many of which we cannot help suspecting to have been dated at the lunatic asylum, while even the best of them are suggestive of weak good nature on the part of their authors. The fact is Broadway does not want relieving—if we except one or two points where the tide of travel encounters and is interrupted by the cross-travel from river to river. Look at it for a moment. If Broadway is *relieved* of its crowd, its business bustle, its press of vehicles, as

> "to and fro
> Its double tide of chariots flow."

the street is destroyed—the value of its property is depreciated, its characteristics as an animated, spirited, gay, and thoroughly alive street, are removed, its charm and interest as a resort and premenade cease—and Broadway—as we know it, as we delight in it, as it is celebrated the world over, becomes a matter of history—a second or third rate affair ranking with Bowery or Canal street. People go to Broadway for its noisy, bustling, gay commotion; the shop keepers live by it; the property owners grow rich by it; all the world (in Manhattan Island) like it, saving and excepting certain nervous, restless busybodies who can't let well enough alone. The points where travel in Broadway is seriously incommoded are Canal street, Chambers street, and Fulton street, and in each of these places the difficulty is in the cross travel. Open avenues, therefore, from river to river, and the difficulty is removed. But as for turning out of Broadway its tides of travel, the very source of its splendor and attraction, the thing is preposterous. We want Broadway as it is—not the dull, slow, half filled avenue of a third rate town, but the brilliant, dashing panorama of life, full of motion and being, rich with color and beauty, gorgeous with the spoils rifled from every clime, gay with equipages, fashion, banners—with jewels Cleopatra could not wear—with silks, gems, and precious wares the world has emptied into its vast mart! This is what Broadway is. Why make it less than this? Why destroy its carnival-like aspect? While it remains the gay centre of animation and fashion, it will necessarily be a crowded and thronged thoroughfare, and no plan can make it otherwise, unless it first succeeds in destroying the attractiveness and *value* of the street. No New Yorker wants to hear of the Decline and Fall of Broadway. So let us be rid of these suggestions for parallel avenues, for second story railways, for underground railways, and other absurd emanations of, doubtless well meaning, gentlemen with sanguine imaginations and weak judgments.

Clown. What hast here? Ballads?
Mopsa. Pray now buy some; I love a ballad in print o' life, for then we are sure they are true.

* * * * * *

Autolycus. Here's a ballad of a fish that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the fourscore of April, forty thousand fathoms above water, and sung this ballad against the hard hearts of maids: it was thought she was a woman, and was turned into a cod fish. The ballad is very pitiful.
Mopsa. Is it true, too, think you?
Autolycus. Five Justice's hands at it.

Ballad-selling flourishes as well to-day as it did in the time of Shakspeare, and doleful ditties are hawked about our streets by young Autolycuses, who, if not so picturesque and dashing as their distinguished original, are scarcely less shrewd and roguish. They hold forth usually upon the stone base of church railings, where they spread out in long array, their tempting wares, sundry bricks and rocks securing them against sudden flirtations with the wind. The collections usually afford a greater variety than Autolycus could display—including the doleful, the pitiful, the merry, the patriotic, the amorous, the heroic, of various degrees of interest, and ascending from the positively silly to the comparatively good. We stopped the other day to glance over a collection, and nearly the first our eye alighted upon, was one set forth as follows:—"*The Fate of a False Lover; or, The Successful Triumph of Margaret Garity, who was Tried for Stabbing her Seducer with a Carving Knife, at Newark, New Jersey.*" This was a glorious beginning. We could do no less than read:—

"Come all who feel for innocence,
And learn what I shall say,
Concerning acts of violence
That took place the other day.

"'Tis of a fiend in human shape,
Whose name I cannot tell,
He played his tricks some like an ape,
And then did boast and swell."

The ballad proceeds to state how, "This fiend did court an Irish dame" and "brought her to disgrace," and then

"He did engage another lass,
And to her he was wed,
But awful was his fate, alas,
This comfort from him fled.

"For Margaret met him on the way,
And took a carving-knife,
She stabbed him then without delay,
By which he lost his life."

We are informed that she was tried, found innocent, and is at liberty, "To act a worthy part," and the song concludes:

"The part she carried out was grand,
We'll give her three times three."

Which tragical, touching story we hope will be a warning to all who wish to avoid carving-knives in the hands of sanguinary Margarets — and immortality in poetry like the above.

—A SUGGESTION! People will not economize their negatives. They insist upon doubling them upon every opportunity, at the slighest provocation and with an utter disregard of sense or grammar. Inasmuch, therefore, as conversation can't be got up to the level of grammar, we propose that grammar be brought down to the level of conversation. Let that law be expunged which makes a double negative equivalent to an affirmative, and messieurs and mesdames the people, can amplify on "It *didn't* made *no* difference;" "There *ain't no* house there," and the like, with the perfect concurrence of the schools. If laws cannot be observed, they had better be removed from the statute book, and the one we speak of is almost a dead letter.

—A FRENCH gentleman highly amused us a few days since by the relation of one of his *contretemps* in the early period of his residence in this country when his knowledge of English was but glimmering and uncertain. He chanced to break the key of his room door, and going to his landlady, attempted to explain the accident by declaring that her "*look* was bad!" The lady in question had only one eye, and lacked also other elements of beauty. She colored, her eye flashed, and her lip trembled. It was an infamous insult, and her rage could scarcely be controlled. "What do you mean, sir?" said she. "Your *look is bad*," reiterated the Frenchman, a little staggered at the evident commotion his remark had caused. The lady started up, her arms akimbo. "You insult me, sir. What do you mean by this language?" "I know not vat I say, but I know vat I mean," replied the Frenchman, beginning to suspect that he had been guilty of some atrocious blunder; "I mean your look is bad—see" (rushing to the door and pointing to the lock), your *look*, madame, is bad!" "*Lock*, lock, sir," exclaimed the lady, her indignation suddenly vanishing, and beginning to smile. The Frenchman, scrupulously polite and gallant, saw his blunder, and was overwhelmed with confusion. "Oh, madame, pardon! ze lock! stupid! Pardon, madame!"

—ON the Fourth of July we went to see the inauguration of the Equestrian Statue of Washington. We took our place in a third story window. It rained. A congregation of umbrellas was below us; umbrellas to the right; umbrellas to the left. It was a pity to see the *éclat* of the occasion so endangered by the unfortunate weather. But (auspiciously) before the hour for the ceremony arrived the clouds withheld their water, broke apart, and the sun struggled with them. Umbrellas declined, and the crowd grew denser. Drum and fife ushered the gay troops upon the scene. In the middle of the square loomed up the statue, which mortal public had not yet beheld, a huge canvas cloth ignobly shrouding it from sight. A hollow square was formed by the troops, with the statue in the centre. Far down Fourteenth street plume and banner flaunted in the light. People stood on tip-toe and stretched their necks over the shoulders of the military. Blessed were the tall and stout of limb! Fair faces filled the windows; the house tops were lined. Urchins from long frocks to ambitious pantaloons crowded the stoops and the doorways. The assemblage was vast, dense—and patriotic to the tune of an incessant *feu de joie* from squibs and pocket-cannon. The appointed hour drew near. Workmen appeared and went up on the statue. They began to tug at the canvas. It was wet and clung fast. The workmen crawled in and out among the horse's feet, thrust their heads between his legs, and peered out between the openings of the canvas. More ladders were brought. More workmen ascended, and sacrilegiously clambered over the statue. The canvas began to lift. Ten thousand eyes stared with an impatient eagerness. Washington's foot thrust itself through an envious rent. The huge haunches of the horse became exposed. A part of Washington's boot rewarded the up-stretching necks—then his knee—then his thigh. They ripped the canvas, and his arm and hand stretched out. His head and shoulders alone remained encased. By this time the sun was out brilliantly, and lit up the whole scene gaily and gloriously. Ropes were adjusted—the canvas remained suspended by a single point. The work stopped. Officers galloped to their places. The soldiery presented arms. The musicians took up their instruments. The commander lifted his sword. It waved through the air—down rushed the canvas—the sun flashed upon the brow and head of the figure for the first time—then drum and trumpet and the loud shout rose up, sound on sound, shout on shout! It was a splendid scene. We never saw the equal of its kind. The soldiery far as the eye could reach, with flashing bayonets, gay plumes and banners, the dense crowd, the mass of green in the park, through which flashed the crystal upleaping water of the fountain, the statue so nobly looming up in the midst of the scene, the rich and splendid contrasts of color, presented as a whole a picture really superb. Our party applauded it, exhausted their vocabulary of praise and delight.

An oration followed. We could not hear it. Aggravating and annoying fact! Why do not our out-of-door speakers adopt the ancient accoustic mask? What is the use of addressing remarks to an assemblage which not one out of ten can hear? In the present instance we presume the oration was eloquent. There was much cheering—at which signal we waved our handkerchiefs and cheered too—at what we do not know to this day. There was a good deal of emphasis and gesture—so much was evident, and nothing more. After the speech the troops marched around the statue and saluted it. When all was over we departed, glad, happy, patriotic, and delighted. We have room to add only one word more—the statue is a noble one.

—A TOUCHING incident occurred at Randall's Island on the Fourth. Among the children who exhibited remarkable talent in the speeches and dialogues presented during an exhibition of the city orphans, was a pretty, fair-haired boy, with soft blue eyes and a natural grace that won general sympathy and admiration. After the celebration was over this child became a subject of conversation in a group of visitors, and a lady present insisted that a little fellow like that ought to be taken out and educated by some one rich enough to afford the luxury of a benevolence so exquisite. Scarcely had the words left her mouth when Governor Anderson, who had overheard the observation, stepped forward and offered to put the boy to a good school at his own cost, till he was sixteen. This proposal was scarcely made

when Dr. S. R. Childs of this city—a great hearted man as this act will prove—seconded the noble offer by a promise to assume the expenses of a collegiate education for the boy after he had benefited by the kindness of his first benefactor. These generous proposals were received with enthusiasm by the guests, who all agreed that after this the little fellow should have two birthdays—that which gave him what seemed a miserable birthright of life, and bright beautiful fourth of July, 1856. Generous acts like these are actions worthy of the day and worthy of the men.

LITERARY.

Paul Ferroll is an English reprint, and a novel of more decided character and talent than any we have read in a long time. Its interest is positively intense, and its power quite remarkable. The story is of a murder. Paul Ferroll, disappointed in love, marries a woman whose unfortunate temper soon threatens his married life with misery. Not long after the marriage, the cause of separation between him and his first love is removed. Paul is a man of powerful will—a will that masters all, conscience, feeling, sensibility. He possesses, moreover, a cool, audacious, unscrupulous philosophy. He appears, therefore, to reason much like this: I am miserable as I am, the woman I truly love is lost to me forever, unless by my own hand I remove the bar between us. If my wife is murdered I may be discovered and die for the crime—that would not be worse, better even, than life *with her;* if not discovered I shall be happy with the woman of my heart. I'll take the risk. It is to gain everything—or lose nothing more than what is lost already—for happiness is simply life. The deed is done, without regret, hesitation, shrinking, but so well arranged that suspicion in no wise rests on him. He marries, and lives for twenty years with his new wife, happily, without remorse, unconscious of a pang for his crime, with a wonderful philosophy, condensating into every hour sensations of happiness, a very miser of his time and his wife's society, calmly conscious that any moment in bringing his crime to light would terminate his life and happiness. At the end of twenty years an old domestic is arrested, tried, and condemned for the crime. With perfect coolness Ferroll, to save the innocent, a course always from the first quietly resolved upon in case of any such contingency, reveals himself as the murderer. His wife dies from the shock. He is tried and condemned, but succeeds in escaping by his daughter's aid, to America—and the story does not leave him until his career is ended. This material is very simple, but the story is worked up with a metaphysical subtlety and philosophical skill positively wonderful. The moral we consider a fearful one. It is murder almost justified. It is a nicer and even more curious phase of the crime than De Quincey describes, and aptly should have a place in that reviewer's next paper on "Murder considered as a Fine Art." (Redfield.)

The Huguenot Exiles is a novel by an American author, the scene being laid at the period of the sufferings of the French Huguenots under the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. This period of history has always seemed to us as affording fine scope and material for the historical novelist, and we have frequently expressed our surprise that so good a period should remain untouched. We are glad to be able to give the author of this volume high praise for the admirable manner in which he has performed his task. He has given us a truly superior work. There is, perhaps, a little straining, an overdoing in most of his scenes, a piling up of the horrors,—while his villains are too unmitigatedly fiendish, and his heroes too saintish, but the effect as a whole is fine. Some of his descriptive passages are absolutely grand. (Harper & Brother.)

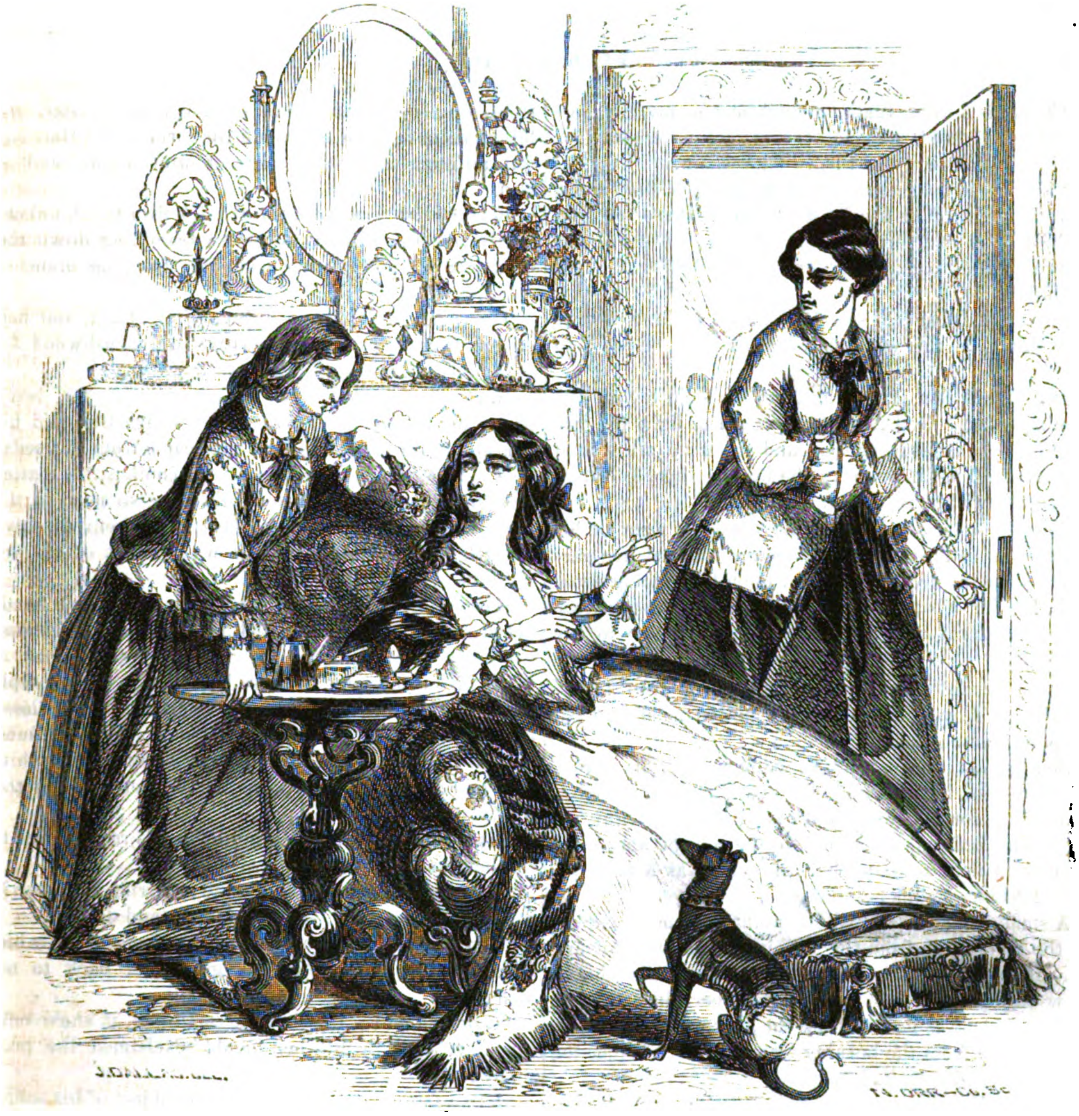
—*Clara; or Slave Life in Europe*, a translation from a German author, comes to us with preface from the pen of Alison, the historian. Mr. Hoklander is the German novelist's name, of whom Alison says, "In graphic description of character in all grades of society, and occasional pathetic power, he recalls Dickens; in the evolving of the story, when to all appearance hopelessly involved, he resembles Bulwer." Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, is authority so high that it becomes presumption for us to dispute his mandates. And yet we would rather have Sir Archibald Alison, Baronet, write histories for us than choose novels for us. We really do not much like *Clara*—but one cause may be in the translation. The story is very Sue like, and the simplicity of the style descends fairly into childishness. The plan of the story is an attempt to prove "that all classes have their own fetters, that the conventional chains of civilized life are even more galling than the rude fetters of the African, and that many a white slave would have something to envy in the lot of Uncle Tom." (Harpers.)

—Ticknor & Fields, of Boston, have published the *Life, Explorations and Public Services of John Charles Fremont*, in a neat volume, copiously illustrated, and written in a peculiarly charming style. Aside from political or partisan considerations the life of Fremont cannot fail to interest every American reader. His career has been crowded with incident and adventure, and affords as perfect a romance as the annals of fiction can produce.

—*The White Chief*, By Captain Mayne Reid, will afford the lover of incredible adventure and startling incident, an abundant feast of marvels. No difficulties daunt the gallant captain in his conduct of a story. Impossibilities fade before him. There is no extravagance which he cannot be guilty of, and if the exploits of his heroes fall short of Munchausen's, we are inclined to set it down to the captain's lack of invention rather than to any doubt on his part of the credulity of his readers. Notwithstanding all this, his books are very readable ones—if it is only to see the extent of the absurdities he will introduce. The illustrations to this volume are sufficiently suggestive of the horrible to satisfy the appetite of the most decided lover of sanguinary fiction. (R. M. De Witt.)

MRS. STEPHENS' NEW MONTHLY.

SEPTEMBER, 1856.



LOST JEWELS.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

CHAPTER V.—THE BURNING CEDAR.

"Is there no house, no living soul near to give us help?" said James Harrington, lifting his white face to that of Ben Benson, while his voice shook, and his arms trembled around the cold form they half supported, half embraced. "If there is a spark of life left it will go out in this cold—if she is dead—"

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S., for the Southern District of New York.

"Don't! oh, Mister James, don't!" cried Ben wringing his hands with fresh violence, "them's cruel words to stun a poor fellow's heart with—she ain't dead, God don't take his angels up to glory in that 'ere way!"

James laid Mabel reverently from his arms, and stood up casting anxious glances through the storm.

"There is a light, yonder upon the hill-side,—you can just see it through the drifting clouds—go, Ben, climb for your life and bring us help!"

Ben stooped down, clapped a hand on each knee and took an observation.

"There is a light, that's sartin," he said joyfully, settling himself in his wet clothes and making a start for the hill; but directly he turned back again.

"If she's so near gone as you speak on, Mister James, it wouldn't be of no use for me to go up there for help—she'd be chilled through and through, till there was no bringing her back, long afore I could half-way climb the hill!"

"I fear it, I fear it!" said Harrington, looking mournfully down on the white face at his feet, "God help her!"

"See," said Ben stretching forth his hand toward the burning cedar, "God Almighty has gin us light and fire close by—the grass is crisped and dried up all around that tree. What if we carry the madam there? I'll go up the hill with a heart in it arter that!"

Ben stooped as if about to take the cold form of his mistress in his arms, but as his hands touched her garments some inward restraint fell upon him, and he drew back, looking wistfully from Harrington to the prostrate woman he dared not raise from the earth even in her extremity.

As he stooped a strange light had flashed into James Harrington's eyes, and he made a motion as if to push the poor boatman aside.

Ben did not see this, and, as we have said, his retreat was a voluntary impulse. He saw James Harrington take up the form he dared not touch, with a feeling of deep humiliation, submitting to the abrupt and stern manner which accompanied the action, as a well deserved rebuke for his boldness.

A small ravine separated the point of land occupied by the little party from the burning cedar, and toward this Harrington bore his silent burden. His cheeks grew deadly pale from a feeling deeper than fear or cold, and his eyes flashed back the gleams of light that reached him from the burning tree with a wild splendor that no mortal man had ever seen in them before.

He held Mabel closer and closer to his heart, which rose and heaved beneath its burden; his breath came in broken volumes from his chest, and an insane belief seized upon him, that though dead he could arouse her from that icy sleep, by forcing the breath of his own abundant existence through her lips.

Fired by this wild thought he bowed his head nearer and nearer to the pallid face upon his shoulder. But the voice of Ben Benson brought him back to sanity again.

"Be careful, sir! The hollow is full of ruts and broken stones! She is too heavy—You stagger and reel like a craft that has lost her helm! Steady, sir—steady, or she'll be hurt!"

James Harrington stopped suddenly, as if a war trumpet had checked his progress. His face changed in the burning light. His arms relaxed around the form they had clasped so firmly a moment before.

"Take her!" he said, with an imploring look. "Take her! I am very weak. You see how I falter—Take her, Benson. She is not heavy, it is only I that have lost all strength!"

Ben reached forth his brawny arms, as we sometimes see a great school-boy receive a baby sister, and folded them reverently around the form which Harrington relinquished with a sigh of unutterable humiliation.

Ben moved forward with a quick firm tread, following Harrington, who went before trampling down the undergrowth, and putting aside the dropping branches from his path.

The cedar tree stood on a slope of the bank, and had cast its fiery rain over the herbage and brushwood for yards around, leaving them crisped and dry.

Harrington gathered up a quantity of the sered grass, and heaped a dry couch upon which Ben laid his charge within the genial heat that came from the cedar tree. Then they gathered up all the combustible matter within reach, and began to kindle a fire so near to the place where she lay that its heat must help to drive back the chill of death if there was a spark of life yet vital in her bosom.

Harrington knelt beside Mabel. He chafed her hands between his own, manipulated her forehead, and wrung the water from her long hair. But it all seemed in vain. No color came to those blue fingers. The purple tinge still lay like the shadow of violets under the closed eyes,—no motion of the chest—no stir of the limbs. At last drops of water came oozing through the white lips, and a scarcely perceptible shiver ran through the limbs.

"It is life!" said Harrington lifting his radiant face to the boatman.

"Are you sartin it ain't the wind a stirring her gown?" asked Ben trembling between anxiety and delight.

"No, no—her chest heaves,—she struggles. It is life, precious, holy life; God has given her back to us, Ben!"

"I don't know—I ain't quite sartin yet, if she'd only open her eyes, or lift her hand!" exclaimed the poor fellow.

Here a faint groan broke from the object of his solicitude, and she began to struggle upon the ground.

"Go," said Harrington, "search out the light we saw—she will need rest and shelter more than anything now."

"I will, in course I will—only let me be sartin she's coming to."

The good fellow knelt down by Mabel as he spoke, and lifting her hand in his, laid it to his rough cheek.

"It's alive—it moves like a drenched bird put back in its nest—I'll go now, Mister James, but d'ye see I felt like thanking the great Admiral up aloft there, and didn't want no mistake about it."

"Yes, we may well thank God: she lives," said Harrington, looking down upon Mabel with tears in his eyes.

"Then I *do* thank God, soul and body, I thanks him," answered Ben, throwing his clasped hands aloft, "and if I was commander of the stoutest man-of-war as ever floated, I'd thank him all the same."

With these words Ben disappeared in the undergrowth and proceeded in search of help.

Admonished by the throes and struggles which proclaimed a painful return of life, Harrington lifted Mabel to a sitting posture and supported her there. His heart was wrung by every spasm of anguish that swept over her; yet at each one, he sent up a brief thanksgiving, for it was a proof of returning consciousness. Still she looked very deathly, and the sighs that broke through her pale lips seemed like an echo of some struggling pang within.

"Mabel," said Harrington catching his breath as the name escaped his lips, "Mabel, do you understand?—are you better, Mabel?"

The name once spoken it seemed as if he could not repeat it often enough, it fell so like music upon his soul.

She struggled faintly—a thrill ran through her frame, and both lips and eyelids began to quiver.

"Who calls me?" she said, in a whisper. "Who calls and where am I?"

Her eyes were open now, and the refulgence falling around her from the burning cedar, seemed like the glory of heaven. In that light she saw only James Harrington bending over her. A smile bright and pure, as if she had been in truth an angel, stole over her face.

"Yes," she whispered with a sigh of ineffable happiness, "he may call me Mabel here."

He could not distinguish her words, but knew from the light upon her face, that she was very happy. His own features grew luminous.

"Mabel, have you ceased to suffer?" he said.

Her eyes were closed in gentle weariness now, but the smile came fresh upon her features, and she murmured dreamily:

"There is no suffering here—nothing but heaven and our two selves."

Oh, James Harrington, be careful now! You have heard those soft words—you have drank in the glory of that smile. In all your life what temptation has equalled this?

For one delirious moment the strong man gave himself up to the joy of those words: for one moment his hands were uplifted in thanksgiving—then they were clasped and fell heavily to the earth, and a flood of bitter, bitter self-reproach flowed silently from his heart. Mabel moved restlessly, like a child that had been lulled to rest by the music of a dear voice. She thirsted for the sound again.

"Did not some one here call me Mabel?" she asked.

Harrington was firm now, and he answered calmly:

"Yes, Mrs. Harrington, it was I."

"Mrs. Harrington," muttered Mabel in a troubled tone, "how came that name here? It is of earth, earthy."

"We are all of earth," answered James, strong in self command. "You have been ill, Mrs. Harrington, drenched through, and almost drowned—but, thank God, your life is saved."

"My life is saved, and am I yet of earth? Then what is this light so heavenly, and yet so false!"

The storm which overwhelmed your boat struck this light. It is from a tree smitten with fire."

"And you?" questioned Mabel, but very mournfully. "You are General Harrington's son, and I am his wife?"

"Even so, dear lady!"

Mabel turned her head and tears stole softly from beneath her closed lashes. How could she reconcile herself to life again? To be thus torn back from a sweet delusion, was more painful than all pangs she had suffered.

They were silent now. For one moment they had met, soul to soul, but the old barriers were fast springing up between them, barriers that made the hearts of both heavy as death, yet neither would have lifted a hand to tear them away.

Mabel at last quietly wiped the tears from her eyes and sat up. She still shivered and her face was pale, but she smiled yet, only the smile was so touchingly sad.

"I must have been quite gone,—why did you bring me back?" she said.

"Why did we bring you back," repeated Harrington with a sudden outburst of passion, "why did we bring you back!" He checked himself and went on more calmly. "It is the duty of every one to save life, Mrs. Harrington, and to receive it gratefully when, by God's mercy it is saved.

"I know, I know," she answered, attempting to gather up the tresses of her hair, "I shall be grateful for this gift of life to-morrow; but now—indeed I am, very thankful that you saved me."

"It was Ben more than myself—but for him you would have been lost," answered Harrington, rejecting her sweet gratitude with stoicism. "He followed you in his boat through all the storm, and was nearly lost with you!"

"Poor Ben!" she said, "faithful always, I had not thought of him, though he saved my life."

Harrington had claimed all her gratitude for Ben with resolute self-restraint; but when she acknowledged it so kindly, he could not help feeling somewhat wronged. But against such impulses he had long armed himself, and directly cast them aside.

"How strange everything looks," she said, "are those stars breaking through between the clouds? They seem very pale and sad, after the light that dazzled me when I first awoke: then there is a mournful sound coming through the trees—the waters, I suppose. After all, this earth does seem very dark and sorrowful, to which you have brought me back."

"You are ill yet—you suffer, perhaps?"

"No, I am only sad!"

And so was he. Her mournful voice—the reluctance with which she took back the burden of life, pained him, yet he could offer no adequate consolation. Commonplaces are a mockery with persons who know that there are thoughts in the depths of the soul, which must not be spoken, though they color every other thought. Silence or subterfuge is the only refuge for those who dare not speak frankly.

Thus without a word, for they were too honest for pretence, the two remained together listening to the low sob of the winds and to the droppings of the rain that dripped from the leaves, long after it had ceased to fall from the clouds. This hush of the storm was oppressive more to Harrington than the lady, for she was languid and dreamy and lying upon her couch of dry leaves, very feeble and weeping quietly without a sob, like a helpless child who has no language but tears and laughter. In this entire prostration of the nervous system, she forgot—if she had ever been conscious of the words that filled him with a tumult of painful feelings.

He moved a little from the place where Mabel lay, and burying his face in both hands, remained perfectly still, lifting a solemn petition heavenward from his silent heart, not that she might live—not even of thanksgiving—but a subdued cry for strength rose up with the might of his whole being, a cry so ardent and sincere, that its very intensity kept him still.

While this was going on in his heart, a black shadow had crept behind him, and Agnes Barker stood between him and Mabel, leaving her in the firelight, but shutting it out from him.

He did not feel the darkness, and the girl stood by him more than a minute before he looked up.

Mabel moved with a faint expression of pain, as if she felt that the shadow of some evil thing had fallen athwart the light; but she did not unclose her eyes, and Agnes, who had been for some time within earshot, spoke before her presence was recognized.

"Is there anything I can do?" she said in her usual low tones.

James lifted his head, bowed almost to the dust in the humility of his prayer, and saw this strange girl standing before him, her red garments glowing in the firelight, her arms softly folded on her bosom, and her eyes glittering beneath their long lashes, like half-buried diamonds. She seemed so like an embodiment of the evil passions he had prayed against, that he sat mute and pale, gazing upon her.

"You look deathly. You are hurt," she said, stooping toward him with a gesture at once subtle and fascinating. "I saw her boat engulphed—I saw you plunge into the stream—the storm was raging through the woods, but I came through it all!"

Still Harrington remained silent, gazing fixedly upon her, so astonished by her presence that he did not heed her words.

"The lady is not dead," continued the girl, looking over her shoulders, while her garment grew dusky, and lurid in the waning light. "I heard her speaking, but a few moments ago."

James Harrington arose to his feet, calmly and with grave dignity.

"You have come in good time, Miss Barker," he said. "If your cloak is dry throw it around her; even in this warmth she shivers."

Agnes looked back as she drew off her short cloak, and held the garment irresolutely in her hand.

"But you are wet and cold, too, wrap the cloak around yourself. What life can be more precious!"

She said this in a low voice, and moved towards him. He put the garment aside, and passing Agnes, stooped over Mr. Harrington, addressing her in a grave, gentle voice.

"Are you stronger, now, dear lady?"

"I think so!" answered Mabel, moving uneasily, "but some one else is here—I heard speaking!"

"It was me," answered Agnes, spreading her cloak softly over Mabel; "I saw your peril, dear Mrs. Harrington, and came to offer help. My old nurse lives upon the hill—if you can walk so far, she will be glad to shelter you."

Mabel attempted to sit up. The presence of Agnes Barker excited her with new strength. She pushed aside the cloak with a feeling of repulsion, and looked pleadingly on Harrington.

"You will not take me up there!" she said. "It is a dreary, dreary place!"

"But it is the only shelter at hand," urged Harrington.

"I know; but that woman—don't place me, helpless as I am, with that strange woman!"

"You will find a capital nurse there; I left her preparing a warm bed!" whispered Agnes, stooping toward Harrington, till her breath floated across his face; "the walk is a little toilsome, but short; between us, I think she could manage it."

Mabel heard the whisper, and sinking back on her bed of leaves, pleaded against the measure.

"I cannot go up there," she said with some resolution, "I could not rest with that woman near."

"Of whom does she speak?" inquired Harrington.

"It is impossible for me to guess; the fright has unsettled her mind, I fear," answered Agnes.

"No, I am sane enough," murmured Mrs. Harrington, "but I have been warned. No human voice ever spoke more plainly than that lone night bird, as I went up the hollow—he knew that it was unholy ground I trod upon!"

"But you are not strong enough to reach home," persisted the girl Agnes, "the river is yet turbulent—the wind unsettled."

"She is well enough to go just where she's a mind to, I reckon," said Ben Benson, crushing through the undergrowth, "and I'm here to help her do it."

"Thank you," said Mabel, gently, "I wish to go home!"

Ben turned towards Harrington, and, without regard to the presence of Agnes, spoke his mind.

"I don't like the cut of things up yonder, somehow. The woman looks like a female Judas Iscariot.

She's eager but not kind. The madam is better off here with the old tree to warm her!"

Agnes kept her eyes steadily on Ben as he spoke; when he had finished, she laughed.

"You are complimentary to my mammy!" she said, "I will tell her your opinion. But have your own way. We have offered hospitality to the lady in good faith—if she prefers other shelter, I dare say we shall find the means of reconciling ourselves to her wishes and to your very flattering opinion, Mr. Boatman."

Ben threw back his right foot and made the young lady a nautical bow, accompanied with an overwhelming flourish of the hand.

"Delighted to hear as you and the old woman is agreeable. Now if you'd just as lieves, we'll try and get madam down to the boat; I've just bailed it out. The river may be a trifle roughish yet, but there's no danger.

Ben directed this portion of his speech to Mr. James Harrington, who stood by in silence, without appearing to regard the conversation.

He now stepped forward, and stooping over Mabel, inquired if she was willing, and felt strong enough to attempt a return home by water.

"Yes," answered Mabel, sitting up and striving to arrange her dress, "I am stronger now—take me home by all means. General Harrington will be terrified by my absence, and Lina—dear, dear Lina, how grateful she will be to have her mother back again!"

"And your son!" said Harrington, gently.

"Oh, if I did not mention him, he is always here!" answered Mabel, pressing a hand to her heart, and looking upward with a face beaming with an expression of vivid tenderness; "I never knew how much of love was in my soul before."

How unconscious the noble woman was of her dreamy wanderings of speech—how pure and trustful was the look which she fixed upon Harrington's face as she said this. A holy thankfulness pervaded her whole being; from the black deep she seemed to have gathered a world of beautiful strength.

"Come," she said, struggling to her feet and smiling in gentle derision of her weakness, as she felt her head begin to reel, "I am not afraid to try the boat again, if some one will help me."

Harrington did not move, and after a perplexed look from one to the other, Ben stooped his shoulder that she might lean upon it.

When they reached the boat, Mabel was almost exhausted, but she found strength to think of Agnes, who had silently followed them.

"Will you not get in?" she said, faintly, "I should be glad to have you with me."

"No," answered the girl, in the sweetest of all accents, "nurse would be terrified to death. I will return home."

"Not alone," said James Harrington, "that must not be."

"Oh, Mr. Harrington, I am used to being alone. It is the fate of a poor girl like me!"

There was something plaintive in her voice, and she drooped meekly forward, as if imploring pardon for having said so much.

Harrington remained a moment thoughtful; at last he addressed Ben.

"Proceed up the river," he said, "slowly it must be, for the stream is against you. I will see that Miss Barker reaches home safely, and overtake you."

Ben looked up in astonishment. "Why, Mister James, she's allers alone in these ere woods. No blackbird knows the bush better, what's the use?"

Mabel said nothing, but her eyes turned upon Harrington with a wistful and surprised look.

"No matter, she must not go through the woods alone," answered Harrington. "Keep snug to the shore, and be ready to answer my hail; I will overtake you in a few minutes."

Harrington moved away as he uttered these words, following Agnes into the woods.

Mabel looked after them with sadness in her eyes; then, bowing her face softly upon her folded arms, she remained motionless, save that her lips moved, and broken whispers which the angels of Heaven gathered and laid before the throne of God, stole through them. They had advanced some distance up the shore, when Harrington hailed the boat; Ben did not pretend to hear him, but Mabel, lifting her face, now full of gentleness, said, with a smile—

"Stop, Ben, he is calling for you!"

"Let him call and be —— " Ben caught the profane word in his teeth, and swallowing it with a great struggle, commenced again—

"Let him call till he's tired, why didn't he stay with that old Judas and the young witch. To think of going off with sich like, and madame just a dying—halloo away, Ben Benson 'll sink afore he hears you!"

Ben muttered this between his teeth, and worked away at the oars, doggedly resolved to continue his fit of deafness, and give his master a midnight walk through the dripping and rough woods, but Mabel addressed him again with a quiet firmness which he could not find the heart to resist.

"Put on shore, Ben, and take your master in."

"I begin to think he's took us all in a little too often!" muttered Ben; but he turned reluctantly for the shore, and Harrington, without speaking, took his place in the boat.

The moon had broken through the drift-clouds left by the storm, before the little party reached the cove below General Harrington's dwelling. The front of the house was entirely dark, but lights wandered to and fro along the hollow, and anxious voices were heard calling to each other along the bank.

"They're out searching for us!" said Ben, dropping his oars and making an impromptu speaking-trumpet of his hand; directly his voice rang along the shore.

"Ben Benson, and passengers from down stream. All well!"

A shout answered from the shore, and directly eager voices and rapid footsteps rushed toward the little cove; first came Ralph, wild with joy, leaping downward like a panther.

"Is she safe! is she here!" he cried, pausing with dread upon the bank.

"Ralph, Ralph!"

He knew the voice. He sprang into the boat, and fell upon his knees before his mother.

"Thank God, oh mother, mother!"

He could say no more. Gushes of unspeakable joy choked his utterance. He kissed her hands, her face, and her wet robes.

"Mother, mother, tell me what has happened! You are cold—you tremble—all your clothes have been wet—your bonnet is off—that dear pale face, oh mother, you have been in danger, and I not there!"

His love gave her strength. She took his head between her trembling hands, and kissed him again and again on the forehead.

"Oh, yes, my Ralph, I have been very near death—but with all this to live for, God would not let me die."

"No, no, he could not make us so wretched. Oh, mother, what would home be without you? It is only an hour or two since we missed you; but those hours were full of desolation. Tell me—tell me how it was!"

"They did it—they will tell you—I was in the depths of the river, but they drew me out."

"They, my brother James, and that blessed old rogue, Ben Benson, did they save you, mother, while I—I, your only son—was dreaming at home? Oh, James, must I thank you for my mother, with all the rest!"

"Thank God, Ralph, for He has saved your mother!" His voice was impressive and solemn. It seemed like a rebuke to the ardent gratitude of the young man.

"I do thank God, brother James," he answered reverently, uncovering his head. "But, to be grateful to God's creatures is, so far, giving thanks to Him! How often have you told me this?"

"You are right," answered Harrington gently, "but see, your mother needs assistance!"

Mabel had arisen, and was making ready to step from the boat. Ralph turned, and flung one arm around her.

"Lean on me, dear mother. Lay your head on my shoulder; don't mind the weight; I can carry you, if needful!"

Mabel submitted herself to the affectionate guidance of her son, with a sigh of pleasure, and followed by Harrington, proceeded towards the house. When the party reached the room in which we first presented Mabel to the reader, they found old General Harrington in a state of considerable excitement.

The rigid ideas of female propriety which General Harrington enforced in his family, had been greatly outraged that day. This well-regulated home was thrown into disorder by the unaccountable absence of his wife and Lina from the tea-table. He had followed his wife to the bank of the river, and with a feeling of quiet indignation had watched her rowing her own boat down the stream like a wild gipsy. The gathering storm and the danger she was in scarcely impressed him, but the impropriety of the thing outraged all his fastidiousness. Still he was glad to have her away for the brief time that he was in the hills, and but for her long absence this escapade on the river might have been forgiven.

A solitary evening, added to these causes of discontent, had greatly ruffled the general's equanimity of temper, and when his wife appeared deep in the night, her clothes in disorder, her hair disarranged, and her face pale as death, he felt her return in this state as a positive insult to his house.

"Madam," he said, with that quiet irony which was the gift of his cold nature, "it is rather late, and your toilet somewhat disarranged for the presence of gentlemen; allow me to lead you to a mirror." It was not necessary; Mabel had seen herself reflected in the great oval glass opposite, and shrunk back, shocked both by this appearance and the cold insult to which it had given rise.

James Harrington remained silent, but his eyes grew bright with indignation, while Ralph flung one arm around his mother's waist, and turned his bright face upon the general.

"My mother's life has been in peril—she comes back to us, father, almost as one from the dead."

"Indeed!" said the general with a look of quiet surprise. "Surely, madam, you did not remain out in the storm? You have not been on the river all this time?"

"I have been in the depths of the river, I believe!" answered Mabel with dignity. "The boat was upset—I was dashed beneath the wheels of a steamer, but for—" She hesitated, and a red flush shot over her face; the noble woman recovered herself in an instant, "but for your son James, and Ben Benson."

An answering flush came to the general's cheek. He darted a quick glance at his son.

"And how came Mr. Harrington so near you, madam? They told me you had gone upon the river alone."

"And so she did," answered James, stepping forward. "I saw her put out from the shore, apparently unconscious of the coming storm, and followed the course of her boat."

"Why did you not warn her, sir?"

"I did, more than once at the top of my voice, but the wind was against me!"

"And when did all this happen?" inquired the general, more interested than he had been.

"Near a ravine, some distance down the stream. You will not perhaps be able to recognize the place, sir," answered Mabel, "but it is nearly opposite the small house in which Miss Barker resides with her mother."

The general did not start, but a strange expression crept over his features, as if he were becoming more interested and less pleased.

"May I ask you what took you in that direction, madam?"

"Nothing better than a caprice, I fear," answered Mabel; "at first I went out for exercise and solitude, then remembering Miss Barker, I put on shore."

"Surely you did not go to that house!" cried the general, interrupting her almost for the first time in his life.

"Yes, I went," answered Mabel with simplicity.

"Indeed! and what did you find—whom did you see?"

"I saw a stately woman, rude and insolent, who called herself Agnes Barker's mother—nothing more."

"So you found an insolent woman."

"A very disagreeable one, at least, General Harrington, but I am faint and ill—permit me to answer all farther questions to-morrow!"

General Harrington's manner imperceptibly changed; he no longer enforced abrupt questions upon the exhausted lady, but with a show of gallant attention, stepped forward and drew her arm through his.

"You can go to your rooms, young men," he said, "I will attend to Mrs. Harrington."

"Shall I have Lina called, mother?" said Ralph, following his parents, "she did not know of your absence, and I would not terrify her!"

Before Mabel could speak, the general answered for her—

"No, why should Lina be disturbed? Send Mrs. Harrington's maid," and with a gentle wave of the hand which forbade all further conversation, the general led his wife from the room.

CHAPTER VI.

LOVE DREAMS.

Lina had slept sweetly through all this turmoil of the elements and of human passions. Beautifully as a dove she lay in her pretty white couch, with its snowy curtains brooding over her like summer clouds above opening roses. A night-lamp of pale alabaster shed its soft moonlight through the room, and when bursts of thunder shook the heavens, and the lightning flashed and gleamed around the single Gothic casement of her chamber, it only gave to this pearly light a golden tinge, and made Lina smile more dreamily in her happy slumber.

She was abroad upon the hills again, and in sleep lived over the bright hours that never return, save in dreams, to any human soul.

She had left Ralph in the hall, and hoarding up her new found happiness she stole away to her room, kindled the alabaster lamp that no broader light should look upon her blushes, and sat down lost in a trance of thought. She veiled her eyes even from the pure light around her, and started covered with blushes, when the happiness flooding her soul broke in murmurs to her lips.

She longed to speak over his name, to whisper the words with which he had blessed her, and ponder over and over the tone of those words. She was bewildered and astonished by her own happiness. Now she longed to steal into Mrs. Harrington's presence, and tell her of the great joy that had fallen upon her life, but the first motion to that effect brought the blushes to her cheeks, and made her cover them with both hands, like a child who strives to hide the shame of some innocent joy.

At last she began to undress, softly and bashfully, as if she had found some new value in her own beauty. Her hands lingered fondly among the tresses of her hair, and gathering them up beneath her pretty Valenciennes cap, she smiled to see its gossamer shadows fall upon her forehead, giving the whole face a Madonna-like purity.

With a gentle sigh, she pillowed herself upon the couch, and looked up through the cloud of snowy lace that overshadowed it with a wistful smile, as if she expected to see the stars breaking through, revealing new glimpses of the Heaven, already dawning in her young life.

Thus cradled in her own happiness, like a lily with its cup full of dew, she laid that beautiful head upon her arm, and slept. The wind had no power to arouse her, though it shook the old house in all its gables. The thunder rolled through her dreams, like the reverberating strains of a celestial harp, and when the lightning flamed through her room, it only kindled the volume of lace over her head into a cloud of golden tissue, under which she slept like a cherub in one of Murillo's pictures.

Thus Lina spent the night. In the morning she arose at the usual hour, and stole forth to walk. The household were astir in the kitchen, but she saw no member of the family, and went out unconscious of Mrs. Harrington's accident. When she came back, a shy terror seized upon her at the thought of meeting Ralph again in the presence of his relatives; and, evading the breakfast-room, she stole to her own chamber. But loneliness at length became oppressive, and, with a breathless effort at composure, she sought a little boudoir or private sitting-room, which opened from Mrs. Harrington's bed-chamber, and where that lady usually spent some hours of the morning. Lina opened the door softly and went in, trembling with a world of gentle emotions as she approached Ralph's mother.

Mrs. Harrington was seated in a large easy-chair. A morning shawl of pale blue cashmere flowed over an underdress of English embroidery. The tint of these garments did not relieve the pallor of her cheek, which would have been painful, but for the crimson glow reflected upon it from the brocaded cushions of the chair. Her foot rested upon an embroidered cushion; and she was languidly sipping chocolate from a cup of embossed parian which she had scarcely strength to hold. A beautiful Italian greyhound stood close by the cushion, regarding her with looks of eager interrogation that seemed almost human.

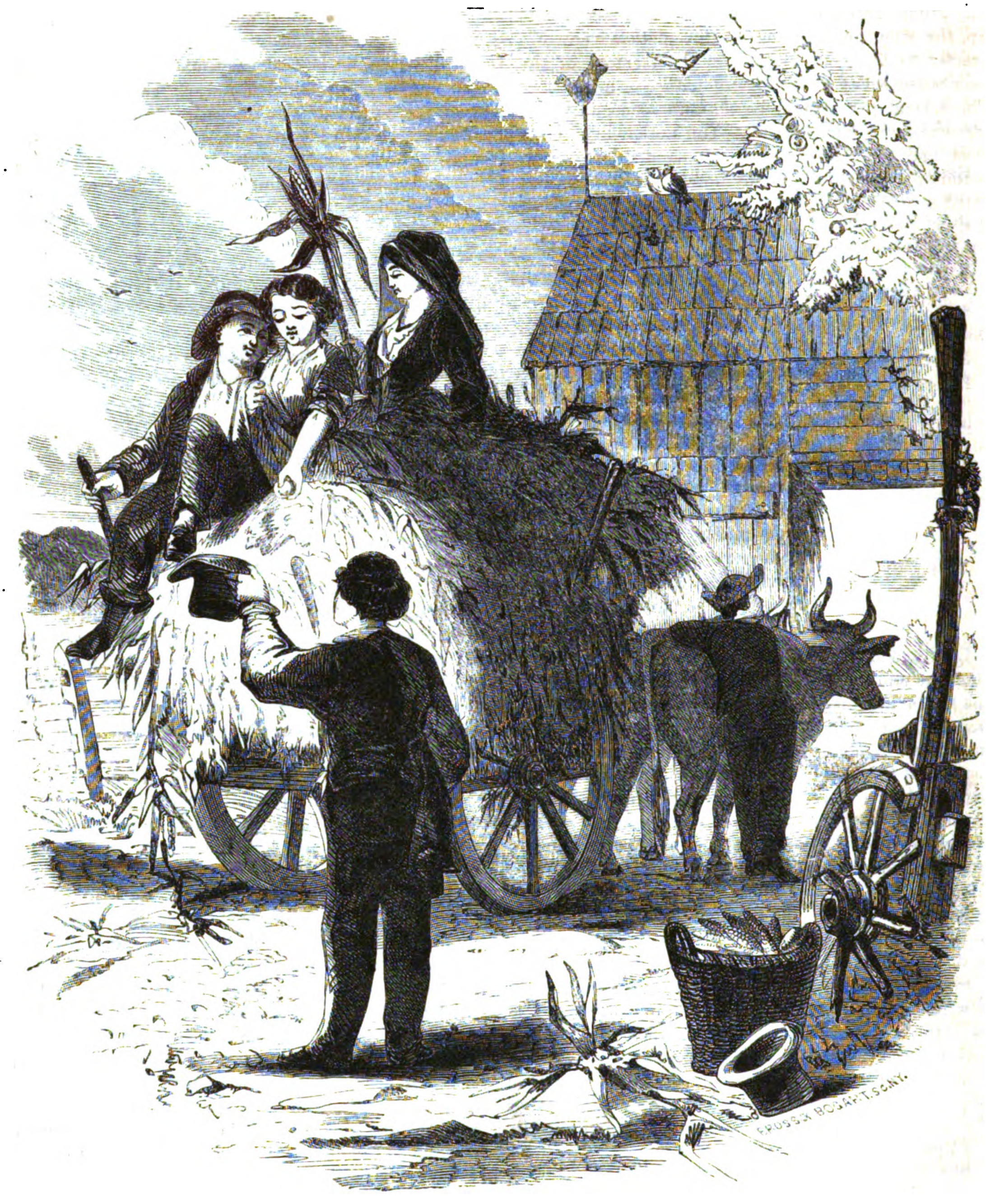
Lina glided softly behind the easy-chair, and remained a moment gathering courage to speak. At last, she bent softly forward:

"Mother!"

Mrs. Harrington looked up kindly, but with a touch of seriousness. She had been wounded by Lina's seeming inattention.

Before another word could be spoken, the door opened noiselessly, and Agnes Barker hesitated upon the threshold, regarding the two with a dark glance. She stood a moment with the latch in her hand, as if about to withdraw again, but seemed to change her mind, and stepped boldly into the room.

(To be continued.)


FROSS & BOBBETT. Sc. N.Y.

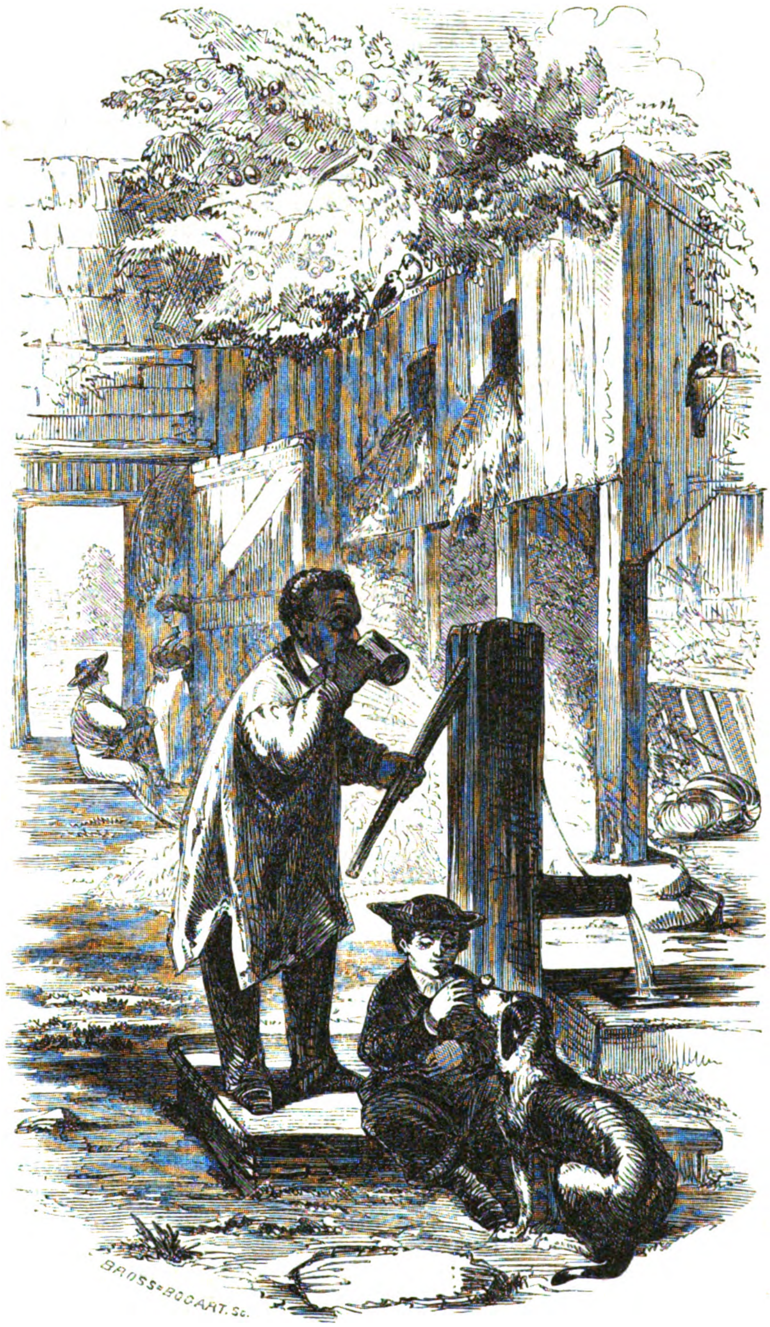
JEROME THOMPSON AND HIS PICTURES.

BY THE EDITOR.

In the Academy of Art, some three or fours years ago, two pictures, exhibited by Jerome Thompson, of New York, were very generally admired, and a group of persons was sure to be found before them, go into the gallery at any hour you would.

They were both illustrations of farmer life in New England. One was a spring morning, the hour just before sunrise—the subject a lovely landscape, surrounding a New England farmhouse. The beautiful stillness, the floating mist above the meadows, the family grouped around the door, but half-aroused from sleep, the atmospheric effect of this picture were of a character to fix themselves upon the memory of any person possessed of a true love of nature or art.

The second picture was an autumn scene, in which there was more stir and life. The nationality of the subject, and the fine grouping left so distinct an impression of originality upon my mind, that it has been selected as worthy of illustration in a magazine which will always perpetuate and honor the genius which best illustrates the scenery of our own lands, and the habits of our own people.


BROSS=BOGART. Sc.

The two groups given to the reader compose the life of this picture, that purely national life which the corn harvest alone exhibits.

"The red ear" is so vividly portrayed that any one who has seen a New England husking, will feel a heart-glow as the group upon the load of stalks presents itself.

The negro at the pump, so thoroughly African—the dog and boy, are also specimens of the artist's happy faculty of grouping. You decide at once that this particular darkey has never deteriorated from the respectable family slave of the Eastern States. He never saw a whole block of houses in his life, but lives away somewhere among the fields, in a little brown house, from which his wife goes out to her "day's work," and the children, a whole flock of little woolly heads, go to school with the sons and daughters of the very families for whom the father harvests, and the mother washes.

Black Jube cares nothing for the great questions of the day. Abolitionism is nothing to him. The only free soil he cares about is the cabbage and potato patch back of his own house. The only freedom he struggles for is that of earning food and clothes for the little black birds at home.

He sometimes thinks, perhaps, that it would be a grand thing to vote among white folks; but isn't very particular, so long as he can hang about the tavern, and get generously treated on election days. He never stops to question why it is that respectable colored people are cooped up like martins in a back pew in the gallery of the village meeting-house; and, in short, is rather pleased with his condition than otherwise. This is a pretty fair character of the negro you see imbibing from the tin cup at the pump, who has his fixed position, and holds a tolerable place on the outskirts of social life in New England, in spite of his color. It was a happy thought, introducing this black man into a New England harvest-scene, because there is an individuality about the class worth immortalizing, either with the pen or pencil.

There is good reason why Jerome Thompson throws his whole soul into these rural scenes of New England. He was born and bred among them, and if ever a man threw the whole fire and force of a warm nature into his art, that man is now under consideration.

Mr. Thompson was born in Bridgewater, Plymouth County, Massachusetts. The exact date of his birth is of no importance, till it is sought for on the monument which will yet be erected for him among the first artists of his country. His father was a portrait-painter of more than ordinary talent; but he must have been deficient in knowledge of character, for while his eldest son John, or Giovanni, as he is known among artists, was selected for his father's profession, Jerome found himself doomed to the life of a farmer.

But it is difficult to force great genius ultimately from its natural channel. While Jerome was busy in the woods with his team, or with his scythe in the meadows, the keen eye and the active brain were hard at work. Hiding a slate away under the logs, or in the brush, the lad would steal time from the luncheon hour, to design pictures and draw the portraits of his fellow-laborers.

Your New England father has stern ideas of obedience, and poor Jerome suffered many a rebuke for the obstinate genius which no authority could suppress. He would steal away into an old workshop on the farm, and study in solitude half the night long, but always performed his duties on the farm with exemplary industry. His great ambition was to paint a life-size portrait—his greatest want, a good sitter. At last one was found, and a good-natured cousin, now an Episcopal minister of high standing, came day after day, at stated hours, into the garret of the old homestead, where the young farmer had surreptitiously planted his easel. The picture progressed rapidly, and a wonderful production it promised to be; but unfortunately, just as the finishing touches were given, Mr. Thompson, sen., discovered the delinquent, with the sitter, in the garret, and in great indignation routed the whole concern. The young artist managed to rescue his portrait from the general ruin, and keeps it to this day among the curiosities of an art he could neither be persuaded nor forced to abandon. Nothing daunted by this mishap, the young man continued to follow the bent of his genius, and by privately painting signs and doing other small works, managed to lay up a hundred dollars, with which he resolved to establish his own liberty. An elder sister, who had always sympathized with his aspirations, and who was herself possessed of a fine genius for miniature painting, resolved to join her fortune with his, and the two left the paternal homestead together, casting themselves with all the hopefulness of genius, upon the wide world. They went first to Cape Cod, the last place we should fancy for the arts to flourish. Here the sister painted miniatures, and Jerome went, heart and soul, into the profession of a portrait-painter. Art was his single idea. Perhaps in the whole history of painting, there is not on record another man who has so completely carried every hope and faculty of his mind into any one profession.

The two artists worked hard and lived cheap. Economy and industry are the best auxiliaries that genius can have, and, even in the unpromising quarters they had chosen, a remarkable amount of prosperity followed them.

From Cape Cod, Jerome and his sister came to New York. Practice had given his pencil considerable force and power. There was at this time nothing lady-like or over-done in his pictures, but they were remarkable as strong likenesses, and for that bold, free coloring which distinguishes him now. He chose grand and bold, rather than beautiful, subjects for his pencil, that is, when he had the power of choice, and his peculiar excellences became remarkable, even at that early day.

After obtaining a fine position among the artists of New York, and some few years after his marriage with a warm-hearted and excellent young person, who has been the sunshine of his artist life, Thompson went to England, where he devoted himself more to landscape compositions, and grouping, than he had yet done. He studied hard, and not only gained a high reputation, but came back with a considerable sum of money.

And now within the last six or seven years, this man may be said to have found the true strength of his genius. He undoubtedly is established in those mixed compositions which combine actual scenery and rural life in the same picture. With all his previous excellence, it may be said that Thomson has never been entirely in his true path before. It is one which he has struck out with time, and toil, and much anxious thought, yet it impresses the beholder at first sight, as a sudden inspiration. Still life landscape seems insipid compared to the rich scenery with which he blends and groups actual existence.

The pictures from which these two groups are taken, offer a fine specimen of the style in which he excels. But within the present year, he has completed another called the "Apple Gathering," that surpasses anything he has yet done, and still another less pretentious, but quite as beautiful, called the "Watering Trough," in which there is a splendid old willow tree, sheltering a group of persons around a horse in the foreground, upon which the prettiest little rogue of a boy is held by the father, while the elder sister looks smilingly on.

Of the "Apple Gathering," a fine steel engraving is in progress, which will be an honor to our national art. The other picture is possibly in the market. It was for sale a day or two after its completion in June last. But Thompson has not yet reached the zenith of his artist life. He is growing stronger and more assured in the exercise of his genius every day, and if he lives ten years longer, concentrating himself as he does, on purely American subjects, the great mistake which his father made in endeavoring to make a farmer of Jerome Thompson, will be acknowledged by the whole country, which his art will have embellished and honored.

LOVE IN '76.

An Incident of the Revolution.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLANCHE DEARWOOD."

CHAPTER VI.

Rose left Major Cleveland in great excitement of manner, but with all her wits strung to their utmost tension. Her mind was unusually clear, sharp, and decisive. Some bold and desperate step was necessary as matters now stood, and with compressed lips she resolved to take it whatever it might be. Plan after plan, suggestion upon suggestion, floated through her mind—presented themselves, were examined, dismissed, and she still remained undecided as to her course.

To marry Walter Armstrong that night was her determination; and she was only at loss, therefore, as to the means to accomplish such an end.

As she entered the house she saw Mr. Metcalf, the pedagogue, and hastily drawing him aside, commanded him to watch Major Cleveland—his every step and movement.

Scarcely were these words uttered, ere Captain Arbald came smiling and bowing up to her, begging her hand in the dance then forming. Rose accepted immediately, and they entered the drawing-room together. The young captain framed a very pretty compliment in reference to her absence from the *fête* and her return, in which eclipse, sun, darkness, and sundry personages of the mythology were obscurely commingled, but Rose scarcely heard a word.

The dance commenced, and in the midst of it she looked up and saw Major Cleveland standing with folded arms, smilingly watching her. When she looked again, she thought she saw a motion or a signal to her companion, which she felt assured was answered over her shoulder, as the major with an acquiescing nod turned and walked away.

As he did so, Rose saw him stop suddenly and stare, as if strangely interested, upon the person of her maid—a young but superior Irish girl, the daughter of a neighboring farmer—who stood half way up the hall, but quite visible to Rose from the position in which she chanced to be. The major, after looking at the young girl for a moment or two, turned and walked, with his hands behind his back, towards the hall door. As he did so, the broad gush of light that poured from the drawing-room into the hall, fell upon his features, and in the instant of time which Rose could observe his face, she saw that it was lighted up with some new thought, over which he appeared to be chuckling with delight.

"He is laying his train," thought Rose; "what can it be?"

She looked from him to the maid, instinctively feeling that she had something to do with the major's visibly expressed pleasure, when suddenly a suspicion of the truth flashed upon her mind. She almost uttered an exclamation aloud as it did so. She could scarcely muster patience to finish the dance. Here, indeed, was unscrupulous subtlety to contend against. But should it win? Not while her wit remained her own.

The instant the dance was over, Arbald made an excuse for leaving her, and she saw him hasten away in the direction the major had gone.

Her own course was resolved upon without further hesitation. Hastening up to Metcalf, she whispered—

"Arbald and he are together. Watch!" And then commanding Bridget, her maid, to follow, she ran up quickly to her own apartment.

"Change dresses with me," was her brief and emphatic command. The girl looked astounded, and began to exclaim, but Rose imperatively commanded her to silence, and repeated the order.

The change was soon effected, and when completed, Rose directed her maid to proceed to the dining-room, to throw open the door which communicated with the hall, and to stand by the window, as if looking out upon the moonlight. In this position her back only would be seen, and the guests seeing her there apparently in reverie, would generally respect her privacy. But if any did approach, Rose's directions continued, she was to step out upon the piazza, as if unwilling to be observed, and if followed then, there were abundant ways of escaping detection once in the garden walks. Bridget was a shrewd, smart girl, and Rose felt every confidence in her ability to carry out the deceit.

Meanwhile, Metcalf followed Arbald and the major, who, walking down a garden, both halted by a bush, behind which Metcalf crawled up and listened.

Major Cleveland explained to Arbald, in a few words, how matters stood.

"Now," said he, "I have an idea which, if carried out, puts Armstrong in our hands beyond appeal, and opens your way to the hand of Miss Elsworth. I am sure that Rose will attempt by some means to consummate a marriage with this rebel before to-morrow morning. She is shrewd, cunning beyond belief, and unless we play a desperate game, it will assuredly be done. Now she has a girl in attendance upon her who is near her size and figure—a mischievous wench, or I'm no judge of physiognomies. My plan is to bribe this girl—a fifty pounds will do it, and I'm resolved to stand upon no trifle to bring my object about—to bribe this girl, I say, to represent her mistress, disguised as her to be introduced into the presence of Armstrong, and there married to him—he thinking it Rose, and knowing her character, ready to suspect some plan in it to secure his escape. Do you see?"

"The girl will never consent."

"We'll tell her it's a jest—a sham marriage for the humor of the thing—or else, which would be true, show her that she will be a widow before to-morrow night, with a good fifty pounds in her pocket, and free to marry again, if she pleases. Send her to me and I'll manage it, never fear. Luckily we have the chaplain with us. Go hunt up the girl, but don't be seen talking with her."

Arbald went to obey his superior's commands, and Metcalf crawled off and made for Rose's presence as rapidly as possible.

Ascending to her room, he knocked at the door. She admitted him, and listened to his communication without surprise. It was all just as she had divined.

Cautioning Metcalf to the most rigid silence, Rose descended by a back way to the lower floor, and slipped out of the house unobserved. It was not difficult to manage it so that Arbald should see her; and she allowed herself to be conducted, with averted face, to the presence of the major.

The reader knows Rose's brilliant parts too well to question her ability to act well the part she was assuming. It was exactly the thing she could do better than almost any other woman. Her mobility of face, figure, and expression, the versatility of her talent, her power of mimicry, which was considerable, would have enabled her to have deceived Major Cleveland under less advantageous circumstances than those in which she was placed. As it was, the shadow of a tree in which they stood effectually concealed her features, and her voice she knew how to manage too well to fear disclosure in that way.

"You look like a lively, quick-witted lass," said the major.

"Oh, sir, so all 'our' admirers say."

Rose knew how to assume all the airs of a "lady's own lady."

"Do you know how to keep a silent tongue?"

"Bless us! Haven't 'we' always been in practice? Ain't 'we' mum as to what all the fine gentlemen say to 'us?' about the bouquets, the presents, the love-notes——"

"Yes, yes. But how would you like to earn fifty pounds?"

"Good gracious! fifty pounds? How can you ask?"

"Fifty pounds if you will marry—in jest, mind—a gentleman, whom I will name to you."

"Well, did I ever? Marriage! real marriage?"

"No, only in jest—to decide a wager. You must disguise yourself as your mistress, when you will be admitted into the presence of Captain Armstrong——"

"Dear me! Captain Armstrong! Well!"

"A pretended chaplain will be by, and a sham form of marriage will be gone through with. Do you understand?"

"Yes, yes."

"You must not speak above the lowest whisper, nor let the captain see your features. A few words and the joke is through with, when you can hurry back to the house. The moment it is done, fifty pounds are yours."

"But, I don't understand——"

"Oh, you understand quite enough for your part of the performance."

"Now, major, it's only to be a play marriage, sure?"

"Nothing but a joke, I assure you."

"The villain!" muttered Rose between her teeth.

"You will do it, and make the fifty pounds—quite a little fortune for one like you, you know."

"But s'pose, sir, it should turn out to be a real, no-mistake marriage——"

"But, it can't. Come, do you consent? It's only a jest. You will see that for yourself."

"Will Captain Armstrong think it a jest?"

"Oh, I'll manage that. He thinks there is a plan on foot to introduce your mistress to him for a similar purpose, and so I've planned this trick. To-morrow, when he is freed, we shall all laugh over it together. What say you?"

"Fifty pounds, sir—all in gold, mind you—is more than 'we' can resist. I'll slip on one of my mistress's dresses at once."

"Do so. Meet me here the moment you are ready—in half an hour, say."

Rose released her hand from his, which he had held all the while, and pretending to be adjusting her dress, glided past him without exposing her features to his gaze.

In less time than that mentioned by the major, Rose was upon the spot designated. She wore a heavy veil that shrouded her head and face, and her dress now was, of course, one of her own. In a few moments the major came up.

"Good," said he, "you look your mistress to the life."

"I'll act her to the life, sir, you may be sure of that."

"I *am* sure of it. You're a smart girl."

"You'll be more ready to confess that by and by," thought Rose.

"Are you ready?"

"I am, sir. Please to tell me, major, now, what really is to become of the young captain?" said Rose, as they walked off together.

"Do you like the captain?" inquired Cleveland, in response to her query.

"A smart boy, your honor, but not rich enough nor bright enough for Miss Rose Elsworth, is my way of thinking. Why, sir, she ought to be able to marry a man as high as yourself—a major or a gineral."

"She could if she would not throw herself away upon this clown."

"That's what I think, and say, mister major."

"Would you like to prevent it?"

"Prevint it! how, I'd like to know?"

"By this marriage."

"What does your honor mean?"

"By making this marriage a real one."

"Good gracious! You take my breath away!"

"Hush! Don't raise such a clatter?"

"You know, sir, 'we' must faint upon such occasions."

"It would be a mere form. The captain dies to-morrow——"

Rose, in her character of Bridget, could do no less than scream at this information. The major feared he had gone too far, yet he felt it necessary to secure Bridget's consent to the marriage upon some other ground than as a sham one, as the ceremony itself would be too real in character to deceive, and she might spoil all at the very moment of triumph. The idea of a sham marriage he had found a good way to open the subject, but he saw well enough that it could scarcely be completed on such a basis.

"Captain Armstrong," resumed he, "will be sent down to New York to-morrow to be tried as a spy. He will hardly escape. This marriage is necessary to secure an important end. I'll make your reward a hundred pounds instead of fifty. You will be rendering the king's cause an immeasurable service, and I promise to bring you a present from Sir Henry Clinton himself, as a recognition of your services—and, if necessary, find you a real husband into the bargain."

"Oh, lor', you startle me so."

"A hundred pounds, remember."

"I—I, really sir——"

"You're gone too far, girl, to retreat. You must marry him, knowing my plans as you do, or be sent down to New York a prisoner yourself. If the captain does not die, you can obtain a divorce—I will assist you to it."

"I'll do it, sir. It's hard, but I know if I should be sent down to them prison ships, I should die—I should. But, don't tell anybody—please don't."

"The secret will be safe. Here is a ring for the ceremony. Remember now—caution. Keep your veil over your face. It will be over with in a moment."

They had arrived at the barn. The guard stood back and saluted them. Cleveland gave his companion a warning pressure of the hand, and Rose was ushered into the presence of her lover.

The place was dimly lighted by a single lantern. Walter and an officer in dark uniform stood by a bench on which the lantern rested. As Walter saw Rose enter, he gave a look of surprise and started toward her. Rose seized his arm, and whispered quickly—

"Be governed by me—a scheme—a marriage—to save you."

Looking back, Rose saw a figure in the darkness watching her, which she knew to be that of Major Cleveland. The guard stood also looking in. This she was glad of, as a witness was necessary. Taking Walter's arm, she led him up before the chaplain—who, simply informed that he was to marry the prisoner to a woman who would present herself, and to mention the circumstance to no one, began the ceremony at once. Walter was confused and astonished, but a pressure upon his arm from the hand of Rose, and a sudden look full of meaning which she managed to give him from beneath the folds of her veil, controlled the expression of his astonishment, and he quietly, but with vague wonder, performed his part in the ceremony—not a little delighted, we'll be sworn, at this unexpected consummation of his heart's wishes.

The major saw the marriage performed quietly and without disclosure. He had divined with great clearness and nicety that when Walter should see before him a figure which he would suppose to be Rose's, and a chaplain present, a single whisper would be sufficient to open the captain's eyes to a plot on foot to serve him, and that he would unresistingly and without ado be guided by his supposed mistress.

All this turned out just as the major had foresaw. His plan, indeed, had been a good one. He had only made one blunder—but that was rather a big one.

The ceremony was completed. The chaplain closed his book. Rose drew her veil closely around her face and passed hurriedly out, trembling, now that the thing was over, and amazed at the temerity of the step she had taken. She had not passed ten steps from the door, before Major Cleveland stepped up to her side from out the shadow of a shrub into which he had withdrawn.

"You've done it, hey?" said he.

"Yes, your honor. It's a great shame and a wickedness, and I could bite my tongue out for consenting. It's remorse that's in me, mister major."

"Tut, tut," replied the major; "here's the sum I promised you. You're richer, my girl, than you ever were before, I'll be sworn, and done more good than harm at that. Why, who knows? I shouldn't wonder if old Mr. Elsworth should reward you, too, for so nicely ridding him of an impudent suitor to his daughter. There! not a word, you know."

He slipped into her hand a roll of notes, and then turning upon his heel would have walked away, had not Rose seized him by the arm with well acted fear.

"Don't leave me, don't leave me, yer honor. It's guilty I feel with this gown on, and if any of the young officers should speak to me, the murder would out."

"That's true. I will walk with you to the side entrance. Keep your veil close."

"Never fear, mister major. It's ashamed I'll be to look at my own face from this hour forth. I tremble all over with the guilt. Do, yer honor, let me support myself a bit on yer arm."

Rose took her companion's arm. The major yielded it awkwardly, and with an inward imprecation upon the impudence of the supposed Bridget. Rose continued talking, without noticing the manner of the major.

"Ah, sir, I shall never dare look in Miss Rose's eyes again. What will she say to me, to be sure? It will be a dumb and shame-faced moment for me when she looks right through into my heart with those eyes of hers, and says, 'Bridget, was it that ye did?'"

Pouring out a flood of lamentation, sorrow, and regret in the above style, she succeeded in guiding Cleveland around and up to the rear entrance of the building without his perceiving their course.

"Confound it, girl, where have you brought me?" exclaimed he, as he found himself on the piazza of the house. We shall be exposed."

"No fear of that, sir. Jist let me glide into the dining-room unseen, and it'll be all right. Let me hold yer arm close. It would be an awkward thing for some of the young gallants to pry me out now—wouldn't it, sir? Only leave me in the room—the rest will be all right, never doubt."

Without observing the awkward restraint with which the major yielded his arm, Rose led him into the house, and quickly passing into the dining-room, they entered together. The room was lighted, for the guests had freely been passing in and out. The major rather roughly shook himself from his companion, and turned to leave the room. Rose glided before him, closing the door as she did so, and stood facing him with her back to the door.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed he, impatiently. I mustn't be seen here with you. What do you mean, I say?"

Rose threw off her veil.

"It means, Major Cleveland," exclaimed she, "that I had the trump card, and have taken the trick!"

The major started back with the most bewildering and unconcealed amazement, as the clear ringing laugh of Rose Elsworth burst upon his astounded senses. Rose, with her lightning eye, her cheek glowing with a splendid carnation, stood looking at him, the impersonation of exultant triumph.

The major could not speak. He was a picture of rage, mortification, and foaming fury.

"I'll thank you, sir," said she, pointing to the wedding-ring upon her finger, "for an order for Captain Armstrong's release."

"Miss Elsworth!" at last exclaimed he, between his teeth.

"Your pardon, sir. Mrs. Armstrong—by your kind assistance."

"By ——!" The major choked down the oath, but he shook his fist in the air. "Caught! tricked! Fool, miserable fool!" He beat his brow and foamed like a maniac.

"It was too bad, I know, Major Cleveland, to make you pay so dearly for your own discomfiture, but really, the trouble you gave me entitles me to the hundred pounds. I'll keep them, sir, as a memento of the occasion."

"The wench betrayed me, then. I'll —"

"Not at all, sir. You never spoke a word to Bridget. I was the only person you saw."

"Ha! Then Arbald is a traitor —"

"He is innocent as a lamb. The guilt, sir, lies wholly on me. Shall I send for Arbald that you may commission him to release Captain Armstrong?"

"Madam, this is a farce!"

"Sir, I know it. But it has been played out, and you, unwittingly, have acted the clown."

"The end is not yet. I refuse to release Captain Armstrong. I refuse to be governed by a forced construction to a promise which I meant to apply differently. He is still my prisoner, madam, and your proceeding shall only hasten his condemnation and punishment. By heavens, I have a mind to go at once, and shoot him like a dog!"

"If your promise," said Rose, calmly, "is not observed to the letter, I'll proclaim you through the army. I'll degrade you in the eyes of every English officer and gentleman in the land. You disgrace your sword, sir, by this very hesitation. Your bitter, unsoldierly and dishonorable hatred and persecution of an honorable prisoner, drove me to an extremity which nothing but a question of life or death could have permitted me to undertake. My womanly modesty I was forced to outrage. You compelled me to stoop to things which I abhorred. But I have a brother who is an English officer; a husband who is an American one. Be careful, sir, in what way you use my name in connection with this night's work, for, be assured, they will not fail to punish a ribald, a slanderous, or a libertine tongue. Release Captain Armstrong, and your discomfiture remains a secret. None need know it, for the marriage I shall require to be publicly solemnized before consenting to bear his name. But refuse, and with one word I'll have all our guests on this spot, and a public confession."

Major Cleveland walked the floor during these remarks, gnawing his lips, and muttering fierce imprecations.

"Madam, I'll not abandon the field so easily."

"You are conquered, sir, and must do so or yield."

"It's absurd to suppose that I'm to be bound by such figments as you have woven. The thing is too ridiculous."

"You acknowledged the binding nature of your promise, when you attempted, with such heartless cruelty, to entrap the captain into a marriage with an Irish servant. How would that story sound, think you? And what would be said of the sagacity and discernment of an officer who could allow such a deceit to be practised upon him as I practised upon you? Dear me, Major Cleveland, I think that you are in a quandary—a very awkward one. There is only one retreat—let the captain go."

Rose took a seat with smiling unconcern.

"I shall wait for your decision, my dear major. But pray recollect, the guests are wondering where we are all this time."

The major ground his teeth together. To give up the captain was a sacrifice he could not bring himself to think of—to refuse was to entail consequences disagreeable and vexatious beyond endurance. He tried to think of a loop-hole through which he might escape. Nothing suggested itself. He was hemmed in on all sides. He walked the floor with ill-concealed rage, while Rose, with a provoking good-humor, toyed with her fan, and shot glances of triumphant mischief at him. At last he stopped before her.

"Miss Elsworth!"

"Excuse me, sir, if I assist your memory. Mrs. Armstrong!"

"Mrs. Armstrong, then —"

He was interrupted by the quick, clear crack of a rifle. The major started, and turned his head to listen. It was followed immediately by a dozen rapid discharges and a faint, distant shout. He drew his sword, and throwing open the door, hurried into the hall. Rose darted from the room by another way, which ushered her into the drawing-room. Here all was terror and confusion. The officers, at the first alarm, had left their partners, and hastened without to learn the danger. Some of the ladies were screaming, all were pale, but the largest number remained calm and collected. They were used to such scenes.

Meanwhile, confusion and uncertainty prevailed without. The discharges still continued. Major Cleveland took his stand upon the piazza, and rapidly gave his orders. Officers rushed hither and thither, and the troops, many of them aroused from slumber, began rapidly to assemble, and form upon the lawn. A sentinel was brought up, badly wounded, who explained that he had been fired on from an ambuscade. A young officer, a moment afterwards, came up, and hurriedly informed the commandant that they were beset on all sides by a party whose number it was impossible to ascertain. The moon by this time was near its setting, and for the moment, obscured by a cloud. This of course confused and embarrassed the movements of the loyalists, but they were soon mounted, and, headed by Major Cleveland, dashed towards the scene of attack.

The ladies, huddled together, listened to the clamor with the courage which so distinguished the women of that period, but with anxious and painful suspense. Several of the troop had been detailed and left to protect them—for Major Cleveland would rather lose a battle than his reputation for gallantry.

Rose was pale and calm. If she secretly experienced more fear and anxiety than the rest, it was because she had so much more at stake. She could not conceal from her fears the likelihood that Major Cleveland might attempt to sever the gordian knot of his perplexity by the death of Walter—so easily accomplished in the midst of a melee like this, without a chance of the deed being traced home to its actor.

As Rose listened, she thought the firing became narrowed and more concentrated to one point. This point appeared to shift, and to grow more remote. Suddenly, even while this continued, her quick ear detected a struggle, an occasional shot, and the bustle of some movement nearer the house. Was an attack pending against them? She walked to the window with the intention, if possible, of learning the cause of this singular movement. Kate rushed before her, and threw her arms around her neck.

"Don't, sister, don't expose yourself."

Suddenly a rapid discharge of pistols, musketry, &c., took place apparently very near the house. Rose, alive to the situation of her lover, detected that it was in the direction and certainly near the outhouse, in which Walter was confined. She shuddered, and covered her face with her hands. The discharge was followed by the tramp of horses' feet, the clash of steel, a shriek, then a loud cheer and a furious rush of horsemen galloping through the grounds. Rose darted to the window, and threw open the shutters. A party of horsemen were crushing through the shrubbery, but making for the spur of the forest. Was she mistaken? Did she not for a single instant catch a glimpse of one form towering high and nobly, which could belong to no other than Walter Armstrong? Had he escaped? A thrill of joy ran through her veins. Hope was more than fear, and she staggered to a chair. As she did so, she saw the face of Mr. Metcalf looking at her through the doorway, beaming and delighted. He *was* safe then. A thanksgiving went up to Heaven from the depths of Rose's heart.

The firing was becoming distant, scattered, and faint. It soon ceased altogether. In a few moments, Major Cleveland and his troop came galloping up. The major leaped from his horse, and entered the drawing-room.

"The danger is over, ladies. The enemy is put to flight. I hope you will resume your dancing without fear. I shall guard more carefully against a repetition of such an alarm."

Captain Arbald burst into the room, and whispered a word to his commander.

"Escaped! We've been tricked."

"It was all a *ruse*, sir, to effect a rescue of the prisoner."

"Are you the victors, gentlemen?" said Rose, rising, and smiling with a quiet sarcasm that stirred up all the major's rage.

"Your precious lover——"

A look of concentrated indignation from Rose checked his impertinence; and, turning to the company, the major bowed, hoped that they would resume their pleasures, and walked from the room.

"Where are the guard?" said he to Arbald, as soon as they had withdrawn from the presence of the ladies.

"Both badly wounded."

"A curse upon them."

"It was adroitly planned, sir. We followed a will-o'-the-wisp, while the real enemy was near at home. The whole party probably did not number twenty men. A half a dozen lured us from the spot, the rest made a rush for the prisoner. Both of the guard were struck down, but, though wounded, they recount with clearness the whole affair."

Captain Arbald's surmises were mainly true. Walter's companions, whom he had left in the forest, finding that he had fallen into the enemy's hands, roused up the neighbors and effected his rescue in the manner we have seen.

Major Cleveland took a turn up and down the piazza, after listening to the account of the affair from Arbald. "Humph!" muttered he at last, "I believe it is fortunate, after all. I was in a perplexity. Fate has decided for me."

He had spoken aloud. Rose was on the piazza unseen by him, and overheard him. "Magnanimously said, my dear major. The battle is over, and let us be friends. Will you dance?"

"Madam, I yield to a woman. You fight with weapons I do not understand——"

"With wit, eh?"

The major wiped his brow.

"Really, Miss Elsworth, you have me at every point. I am a prisoner at your mercy. May not to-night's work be forgotten?"

"Yes, if you seek no vengeance upon Armstrong."

"You have my signet."

"True. I will trust you."

The pleasures were resumed, but with some constraint. The ball continued, however, to early daylight, when the guests dispersed, conducted to their respective homes by companies of the troops. A little after noon Major Cleveland resumed his march, and the mansion resumed its old quiet and peace.

When all were gone, Rose went to her father's library, seated herself at his feet, and confessed all. He was astounded. The perfidious scheme of Cleveland's aroused his indignation—for he was a man of the nicest honor—and entirely justified, in his eyes, the extreme measures of his daughter.

"I designed it otherwise, Rose, but you have shown me the extent of your devotion to Walter. I will hope that time will open his senses to the wrong he is doing, and thus remove the only obstacle that ever existed to your union."

That very day Mr. Metcalf came to Rose, and after much hemming and hawing, asked her consent to his marriage with Bridget.

"Oho," said she, "then you've been making love under the *rose* all this time!"

The consent was freely given.

Six months after the events above related, the marriage between Walter and Rose was re-solemnized, publicly. Walter continued in the service during the war, got to be a colonel, and lived for many years after the war—the reader knows how—in peace and plenty of course.

Now that I am at the end of my story, I find its title is a misnomer, for what difference after all is there between love to-day (or any other period) and Love in '76?

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THE MIDNIGHT FRIGHT.

At twenty years of age I was in love. It does not matter to the reader how I came to be in love. It is but of little importance to him, and none at all to this story, when I first met my dear Amanda — or who, indeed, my dear Amanda was. It is quite sufficient for me to say that my Amanda was the dearest creature; that she had blue eyes; great long golden locks, which she would shake at me in the most bewitching manner; nice, pearly teeth; a dimple in her chin; blooming cheeks (alas! I afterwards discovered that her bloom was imported) and as pretty a little hand as one would wish to see. My youthful susceptibility was easily impressed with charms like these. I had read a great many love tales, and was looking about for some one for whom I could experience that rapturous passion, which they so warmly describe, when accident threw me in the way of Amanda. I went to work at once. I began to love with all the fervor, devotion, and intensity I could command. I will not stop to confess that a suspicion continually preyed upon me, that my raptures were in some degree manufactured; nor will I pause to cast back, with the disdain and contempt they so richly deserve, the insinuations of mercenary motives, which were uttered against me. Could I help the fact that my Amanda was the only daughter of a rich widow? or that she had a large expectancy from a wealthy maiden aunt? These things were accidents. Amanda and I often confessed to each other how happy we should be in a cottage, or in some lone isle, where only our two hearts beat (and all that sort of thing), and I assert with confidence, that Amanda at any moment would have abandoned friends, rank, and fortune for my sake—had I permitted it. Are my detractors convinced? But this is all foreign to my purpose. It is a ghost and not a love story that I am going to relate.

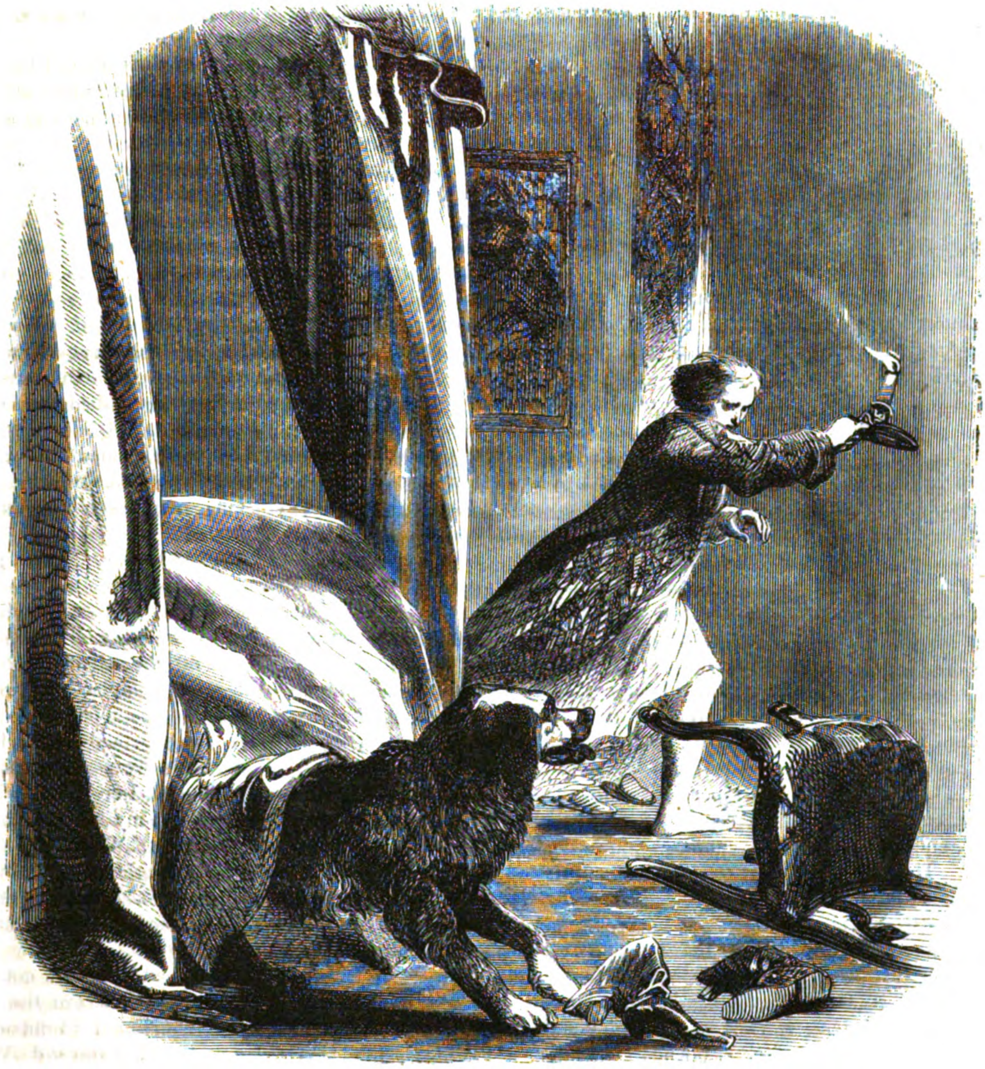
My Amanda and her mother resided in the suburbs of the town. It was an old-fashioned, square brick mansion, built soon after the Revolution, ponderous, gloomy, and, at the time of my story, of a green dampness. Some old trees shaded it thickly—so thickly, the sun rarely brightened up its dark, time-discolored walls. The gardens about it were black and loamy, rank with the growth of shrubbery and weeds. Now the earth carries it around on its bosom no more. First, one of the avenues came, thrusting forward its huge body, crushing through the old trees, trampling under foot the garden growths, and even nipping off an intruding angle; then from another point came a younger, but no less insatiable and relentless highway, tearing through the parlors, the wainscot walls, the lordly old halls, and setting itself down upon the very foundations of the old structure. Thus was the mansion of my once Amanda blotted from sight. A green-grocer now holds forth upon the once treasured spot. I will pause sometimes upon the curb-stone at the intersecting highway, and drop a tear to the memory of the old place—a tear to see the old ground so desecrated.

Regularly, as the clock struck seven, I was wont to present myself at the old mansion. The door always opened as I placed my foot upon the front door-step. Amanda always came out of the shadows in the parlor (never lighted until my arrival), and put her two hands in mine; then my arm would always wind around her waist; then we would saunter in together, and if our lips met in the darkness, what was it to any one?—what was it even to the domestic, whom I would sometimes hear smothering a laugh in the passage? When ten o'clock came—for Amanda and her mother were precise and methodical—I would invariably rise, and, after a tearful parting, depart on my way to my lodgings, some two miles distant.

But upon one occasion—and now I am coming to my story—there was a terrible storm, which increased so much in violence, hour by hour, that when the inexorable mantel clock struck the hour of ten, both Amanda and her mother insisted upon my acceptance of their hospitality for the night.

"Conduct Mr. Dove to the crimson chamber," said the senior lady to the elderly servant who presented himself, candle in hand. I followed my guide up a steep, narrow, and lengthened staircase, and through a series of roomy, deserted apartments, where articles not in frequent use were stowed away. The servant, I observed, stamped heavily as he approached the chamber, hemmed loudly, and looked frequently back over his shoulder, to see if I were following. When he reached the apartment, he fairly backed into it, placed the light hastily on a table near the door, and giving a furtive glance around, rushed hurriedly, and with undisguised terror from the room. I called him back. He came unwillingly.

"What's the matter, Joe?" said I.



"Sir—nothing—sir."

"I should think there was. What are you alarmed at? Is the room haunted?"

"Ye—yes, that's it, sir. It *be* haunted." The poor fellow fairly trembled. I laughed, but as I turned to look within the apartment, a sensation of awe involuntarily thrilled me. The walls, though of crimson, were of so deep and sombre a hue, they might have passed for black. The dark wainscot; the heavy window hangings; the huge bedstead, with its dark crimson curtains looming up grimly and awfully in the centre of the apartment; the dense shadows piled up behind the bedstead, within the folds of the curtains, and flickering strangely and grotesquely upon the walls and ceiling; the dismal howl of the storm without, as the old trees beat against the window shutters, and the rushing of the wind, with shrill, human-like cries through the halls and empty rooms—all these things combined, and no wonder, to produce sensations of indescribable terror and awe.

I dismissed the attendant, and closed the door. The silence, broken only by the wailings of the storm, was fairly appalling, but I bustled around, took care not to look at the awful shadows, and hurriedly throwing off my clothes, leaped into bed. I laughed at my superstitious awe, tried to shake it off, began to stare boldly about the room, and to express my contempt for the weakness I had been guilty of. But I found it more agreeable to turn my gaze inward, and to nestle down closely under warm coverlets, with the hope of wooing oblivious slumber to my eyelids. But I could not sleep. The storm was increasing. The trees around the house groaned and shrieked as if in dying agony. Billows of wind roared down the wide chimney, swept screaming through every cranny and crevice, till, hushed and soothed, the blast would appear to sob itself to rest, dying plaintively away, until suddenly starting up with fiercer power. I was getting nervous, tossing from side to side, in vain attempting to keep pleasant subjects in mind, almost smothering myself beneath the coverlets, until profuse perspiration forced me to gain breath, and involuntarily gaze around.

Suddenly I sprang up in bed, my brow loaded with drops of perspiration, while my breath was short and thick. I assuredly heard a sigh—a long-drawn moaning sigh, close to the very head of my bed. I listened with open mouth, and eyes striving to penetrate the darkness. It was repeated. It was not fancy, nor the wind, but a deep, audible, continuous breathing, of a moaning sigh-like character. I held my breath and listened, while I could feel my hair straighten up, and the blood curdle around my heart. Again I heard it, louder this time, and, to my imagination in its excited state, it sounded like a fearful groan of one in agony. Terror took entire possession me. I sprang with a sudden bound into the middle of the floor, and, with all the haste I could, struck a light. Nothing was visible. The dense shadows which my dim taper drove into the corners, and behind the huge tabernacle of a bed, looked frightful, and assumed shapes gaunt, skeleton-like, and terrible. The perspiration rolled from my forehead. My knees smote together. My teeth chattered, and I could only gasp for breath. Now, when I look back at it, I am as ready to laugh as the reader is, at the absurdity of my fears, but then it was all a terrible reality to me. At last I mustered sufficient courage to approach the bed, with a view of searching out the cause of the mysterious noise. I opened the closets at each side of the bed, where hung dust-covered, moth-eaten, superannuated suits of clothes, which shook as the wind rushed in and disturbed their long repose. Neither sigh nor sound was there. I stooped to look under the bed, when a shrill, loud whistle behind me (probably the wind rushing through the key-hole), was answered close to me by an unearthly noise, a fierce howling, and a dashing, scrambling noise. I sprang back as if I had been shot. Howl followed howl, groan succeeded groan. I stood for a moment paralyzed, and then made one leap towards the door. There was a howling and tearing behind me. I threw open the door, and very possibly shrieked, as I rushed out into the wind-swept hall. Some huge object was behind me. I bounded along the passage like a maniac. I felt the pursuer at my heels. His breath was upon me. I had never known what terror was before. I uttered a cry, and stumbling over some object, fell prostrate, the vampire, ghost, or whatever it was, flinging itself upon me. The light was extinguished in the fall. The *creature's* huge, blood-sucking chops were upon my face. His breath, hot and fiery, filled my nostrils. I threw out my hands instinctively toward the danger, when my arms enclosed a huge, shaggy form, a palpable substance. I grasped it by the throat and struggled with it. Whatever it might prove, I was desperate, and prepared to battle to the last. At this instant a light flashed from the farther end of the hall. A face appeared behind it. Then another light, backed by another face. I could see a blunderbuss amid the folds of the first comer's dress. It was old Joe. The light flashed upon me and my antagonist. I looked down, and saw myself rolling upon the floor in the embrace of a huge, shaggy Newfoundland dog. In an instant the absurdity of my situation, and the groundlessness of my fears flashed upon me. I scrambled to my feet as quickly as possible. I wrapped the loose mantle around me, which I had thrown upon my shoulder when I rose to strike the light, and assumed all the importance of manner I could command.

"Joe," said I, "take this beast away. He's a perfect savage."

Old Joe, trembling and white, and still confidently believing that a ghost was in some way mixed up in the affair, approached, and led off the harmless creature, who stood looking on the scene complacently, wondering, no doubt, what all the ado was about.

It was with difficulty that I could maintain my imposing air until the servants were gone, and then, crest-fallen, and heartily ashamed, I crept off to bed.

I did not dare present myself to my Amanda the next morning—nor even the next night. When I did at last venture into her presence, I thought she received me coolly, but at the same time, with a disposition to laugh at me. I felt exceedingly uncomfortable, and at half-past nine pleaded an engagement.

As I said before, this is a ghost story and not a love story, and I really think it does not concern the reader to know how my love suit flourished. I have inadvertently used the wrong word. The suit did anything but flourish. It rather lost ground after my misadventure—in fact, I never married my Amanda after all. I now believe that she was an unseen auditor of my comical situation with the dog, and being something of a hero-worshipper, she never could forgive the exhibition of pusillanimity and fear thus afforded her. All I can say about it is, wait until she gets caught in a similar fix.

But the lesson was enough for me. I have had no ghost frights since.

AGATHA GRASSET.

A TALE IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

NOT only in Dynebridge, but along the whole valley of the Dyne, there was not a fairer or sweeter girl than Agatha Grasset; so everybody said, and so her father thought; therefore he might have been the more readily contented to leave the matter of her settlement in life to Providence, confident that sooner or later, yet in good time, it would come.

But Mr. Grasset was not so contented. He was a loud, pompous man, with a small income and a large family, and it chafed him to see this, his eldest daughter, despite all her beauty, approaching her twentieth year, while as yet no suitor had appeared willing to take her off his hands. The retirement of Dynebridge, and its dearth of young men, was a solution of the enigma that brought no consolation to Mr. Grasset, for circumstances chained him to the spot, and he saw no brighter prospect for the future.

But one day the echoes of the valley rang with the stirring strains of fifes and drums playing a military quickstep, and a recruiting party with ribbons flying, marched across the bridge, and took up its quarters in the village. The sensation this arrival caused, it would be superfluous to describe. Everyone knows by parallel occasions that the village was stirred to its very foundations. The whole population rose to do honor to their guests, and higher than any other rose Mr. Grasset; and as he was a plausible and rather brilliant man, with a considerable knowledge of the world—some years of his life having been passed in a government office in London—he soon became a great favorite with the officers of the party.

He deserved his popularity, too, in some degree, for he was indefatigable in his efforts for their amusement; and many were the inexpensive little entertainments given at his own cottage on the officers' account. And though in more aristocratic spots those heroes would probably have looked with contempt on the little tea-parties, and the impromptu dance to the piano that often followed them; or the picnics among the hills, in which they sustained the parts of cavaliers to a bevy of village girls; yet here they were pleasant changes to a monotonous life, and welcomed accordingly.

Of the three officers, one was a devoted angler, and spent most of his time on the river bank; another was an inveterate geologist, and was always wandering among the hills, hammer in hand; so the third having no such resources, when once the surrounding scenery had been sketched, fell completely into the hands of Mr. Grasset, and was to be seen daily sauntering with him about the green lanes; and their walk invariably ended by their turning in together at the cottage-gate. And then Hope Cunningham would spend the next hour or so chatting pleasantly with Mrs. Grasset and her daughters—for Agatha had a younger sister fast growing into womanhood, with the same dowry of beauty that she possessed. She was called Claudine, for Mr. Grasset had not failed to give his daughters whatever advantage might be in romantic names.

In Mr. Grasset's house his will was law, and that law was frequently declared with a harshness that made those around him tremble. But now his good-humor was unfailing, and he even went the frolicsome length of rallying Agatha on her "adorer," as he termed the young officer, who, he had already elicited, was the scion of a good family, with an allowance of three hundred a-year, and the money lodged by his family for his company.

"He is no adorer of mine, papa, I assure you," said Agatha earnestly; and she blushed deeply at the thought of speaking of any one in that light.

"Oh, indeed, my dear! I thought he had been. Then it is your mother is the attraction, I suppose!" was the affectedly innocent reply.

"Papa, how wicked you are, when you know that you are yourself the attraction!"

"Am I? Dear me, I had no idea I was so charming—I am afraid you flatter me. But what will you bet upon it—a silk dress to a silk handkerchief?"

"No, indeed, Papa; for I could not afford to pay it; but I don't mind betting you a hair-chain."

"Oh, very well, that will do," he said, rising to leave the room; "but, Agatha," he continued, as he held the door half-open, "I don't think you need trouble yourself to make it, unless for a keepsake when you go away."

After some time, Mr. Grasset was rather indisposed, and confined to the house for a week or two: and every day came his faithful friend, Hope Cunningham, to see him, and was generally the bearer of a magazine, a pamphlet, or a book, to brighten the hours of his imprisonment. It was never long before the invalid would begin to dip into his new treasure; and then the young officer would turn his attention to the ladies of the family, and gossip, and jest, and laugh with them, heedless of the passing time. But Mr. Grasset was not so absorbed in his reading as to be unconscious of all this, or unobservant of the half-admiring glances that Hope Cunningham occasionally cast on Agatha; nor did he fail by sly comic looks to make his daughter cognizant of his discovery, though it sent the blood rushing to her cheeks.

"Upon my word, it is a very pleasant thing to have grown up daughters," remarked Mr. Grasset soliloquizingly one day, as he looked over a beautifully illustrated work Cunningham had just left. "Their lovers are really very polite and attentive, on the principle of 'Love me love my dog,' I suppose, eh—Agatha?"

"Nonsense, papa; how can you go on in this way?" exclaimed the young girl, blushing.

"Because the occasion inspires me. Master Hope Cunningham has really a very pretty way of doing the devoted; the attention he bestows on the old father is very gratifying—of course he can't do less than learn to love him as a son."

Mrs. Grasset and Claudine laughed heartily, and Agatha could not help joining them, though she denied the imputation with almost suspicious earnestness, assuring her father that the inspiration was not true, for that Mr. Cunningham's devotion was entirely that of devotion for himself.

"I am very glad to hear it," was the grave reply; "for I was beginning to be particularly uneasy respecting the expense of wedding finery."

The next day Hope Cunningham made his appearance with a bunch of beautiful water-lilies, in addition to a book.

"What charming flowers! are they for me also?" inquired Mr. Grasset.

"Certainly not," said the young officer, laughing, as he held them back from Mr. Grasset's extended hand; then gallantly expressing his regret that they were not more worthy of their happy destiny, he presented them to Agatha, who received them with the bashfulness of an unpractised girl, infinitely increased by the mischievous glance her father cast on her from behind Cunningham.

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CHAPTER II.

THAT day, when the visitor was gone, Agatha did not attempt to defend herself against her father's raillery, but fled away to her own room, leaving him master of the field. Thenceforward, whenever the garden-gate was heard to open, Agatha Grasset's heart seemed to stand still; and if a light firm step subsequently sounded along the path, it beat so violently that she could scarce summon composure to greet the visitor who appeared.

A few days more, and Mr. Grasset was well again and once more threading the green lanes with his young favorite, over whom his wit, shrewdness, and plausibility were gaining for him a considerable influence. But Mr. Grasset was not now able every day to devote himself to his friend, for business frequently called him to the neighboring county town. And on these occasions, partly from the result of habit, partly from the pleasure most young men take in the society of beautiful girls, Cunningham paid lengthy visits at the cottage, when day by day Agatha's young heart surrendered itself more completely to his keeping.

In these tea-parties and picnics, these walks and visitings, the summer glided pleasantly away, and autumn was beginning to carpet the lanes with leaves, when Hope Cunningham received orders to join the service-companies of his regiment in the West Indies. What a shock the intelligence gave Agatha! For a moment the room seemed to swim round, and she caught at the table to support herself. But the manner in which—in reply to her mother's expressions of regret at his departure—Cunningham spoke of "dear old Dynebridge," and how happy he had been in it, rallied her. What she hoped, she knew not; but it was pleasant to hear him speak thus of Dynebridge; besides, she soon found that he was not to leave for nearly a month, and who knew what might happen before then? perhaps he would ask her to remember him when he was so far away—she would, whether he asked her or not. And with a deep sigh she dried her eyes and went downstairs, and tried to look as if it was nothing to her, when her father jested about lovers' partings.

And now that very acute gentleman watched with a hawk's eye each word and look that passed between the young people; and when a few days had passed, he stayed at home all one morning; and when Cunningham came to seek him, he met him with the inquiry, whether he had received a note from him that morning? The young man replied in the negative, saying that he had not been home since breakfast; and after sitting for a short time in wonder that his host did not enter on the subject on which he had written, he departed, to solve the question by a reference to the note itself.

In a short time he returned.

"I have come about that note you sent me," he said, in considerable agitation.

"Come into my room, we can talk there uninterrupted," replied Mr. Grasset calmly; and he led the way to a little study on the opposite side of the cottage, and closed the door.

"I am greatly distressed, Mr. Grasset, that there should have been any misconception with regard to my friendship for your family. Though I have the greatest respect and esteem for Miss Grasset, I assure you I was far from having any thought of engaging her affections; or aspiring to her hand," said the young officer earnestly.

Mr. Grasset sat gazing for a moment, as if he could scarce believe the meaning of the words that met his ear; and he put his hand on his heart, as though to still the pain they gave him. But there was another heart on which they fell with a weight that crushed out hope and peace, and so bruised the fair blossoms of youth, that they would never flourish more.

For Hope Cunningham had another listener that he knew not of. In a still smaller room within that in which they sat, Agatha, by her father's directions, was engaged in copying a passage from a book. Every word they spoke fell on her ear with terrible exactness; and though, with the natural aversion of an upright mind, she shrank from listening to a conversation not intended for her to hear, she had no means of escape, the only door being that leading into the study; and she felt as if she would rather endure anything than face Hope Cunningham while engaged in that conversation.

After one wild look around, as if for some means of escape, Agatha sank down in her chair, and sat with her hands clasped tightly together, while each burning word was branded on her heart, never to be effaced.

She heard her father ask his companion how he could reconcile it to his conscience to win a young girl's heart as carelessly as he would pluck a flower, and reck as little the withering of the one as of the other; and she heard him whom she had so long loved coldly deny his belief in her affection, express his certainty that she could not have so misunderstood his common-place politeness, and his hope that Miss Grasset would yet find some one far more worthy of her than he should ever be.

Every word Hope Cunningham uttered, every tone of his voice, brought conviction to Agatha's heart that he had never loved her. At once she perceived that her affection had been called forth, not by the young officer's attentions, but by her father's raillery in giving a point and meaning to every word and look that would otherwise have passed by unnoticed. Her heart cried silently to him in sorrowful reproach for what he had done, and more bitterly for what he was now doing, in laying open the secrets of his daughter's heart to a stranger's eye, and one that, as Agatha suspected, he well knew to be indifferent.

Had Agatha's courage been equal to her will, she would at once have cut short this humiliating discussion, by appearing before them, and exonerating Cunningham, while she entreated no more might be said on a subject so uncalled-for. But she was young and timid, and until recently her father had been a stern ruler to her; so she sat still, and with an aching heart listened to her father and Cunningham pursuing that distressing theme; and at length she heard him, with an agony of shame that made each word sharp as a stab, entreat the young officer to marry his daughter for her love's sake.

"I cannot," was the reply; "I have not the means."

Mr. Grasset laughed mockingly.

"It is quite true," continued the young man earnestly—"certainly I have an allowance from my brother, but he has the right of withdrawing it when he pleases; and he would do so immediately, if I married without family or fortune—he would have no mercy on me, for he himself married a woman older than himself, for wealth."

"My poor Agatha!" said Mr. Grasset, sadly; "and yet she would make the most careful of wives."

"I do not doubt it; I believe Miss Grasset to be possessed of every good quality."

"And yet you would have her to die of a broken heart? Cunningham, I cannot stand by and see it."

This was the signal for a fresh appeal to Cunningham's generous feelings. Agatha thought it was the young officer's necessities, not his feelings, prevented him yielding, for his tones declared him greatly moved, but only by pity. Every fresh word her father uttered seemed to add to the burthen of shame pressing down his daughter's head, and to the heart-sickness that was almost overwhelming her. At length the strain became greater than she could bear, and she sunk fainting from her seat. The book from which she had been writing was disturbed by her fall, and fell heavily to the ground beside her.

"Good heavens! what is that?" exclaimed Mr. Grasset, starting up; and going to the door, he opened it, and looked in.

For a moment he stood silently looking at the scene before him; then turning to his companion, he said, quietly, "Come here, Cunningham, there is your work—what do you think of it?"

In silent astonishment the young man stood for a few seconds, regarding the fair face that now, pale and stony, lay on the ground, pillowed only by the brown clustering curls, and the small hands clasped rigidly together, as if in despair.

The thought that this was caused by affection for himself, touched Hope Cunningham's heart. Perhaps the sight of her exceeding beauty, as she lay there in her unconsciousness, touched him also; and he said softly, as if he feared to disturb her—

"I will marry her. I cannot do it now; but when I return from the West Indies I will marry her."

"That is quite sufficient," was the reply; "I only care for my daughter's happiness."

CHAPTER III.

When, half-an-hour after, Agatha first opened her eyes, both her parents were bending over her.

"Ah, here is our fair bride reviving again," said her father, playfully stroking her cheek, which instantly flushed the deepest crimson, though she was still too weak to speak: but later in the day, when she had rallied, when something of the same sort was repeated, she said, earnestly, "Papa, I cannot marry Mr. Cunningham!"

Her father's brow contracted into a frown, she well knew as indicative of stern displeasure. "And wherefore not, I pray?"

"I cannot be married from compassion; and that is all Mr. Cunningham feels for me."

"Upon my word, young lady—and so you are so exigent, that you must even choose why and wherefore your husband marries you! But I tell you, Agatha Grasset, to bless your stars: it is not every girl, so poor as you, who secures such a husband." The poor girl began to weep. The pain of bearing her unrequited love was nothing to the misery of being forced on the acceptance of him she loved. "And more I tell you, Agatha," pursued her father—"when next you see Mr. Cunningham, receive him as it is becoming to receive your future husband; and always treat him as such. Remember, there are to be no silly offers of release, or romantic willingness to sacrifice your own happiness to his. It would be of no use; but the very attempt would bring on you anger such as you have never seen—no, not the fiftieth degree of!"

Agatha had often trembled beneath her father's anger; but even this threat did not prevent her making an effort to set Cunningham free; but he turned it off so kindly, and looked with such admiration on her fair face, with its timid, blushing earnestness, that Agatha could not persevere, and the opportunity was lost, and so were many more.

The betrothal that, had Cunningham loved her, would have made Agatha's heart so joyous, now weighed like an incubus upon it; and her health and spirits sank rapidly beneath the pressure. Mr. Grasset observed her pale cheeks and heavy eyes, and pointed them out to Cunningham, insinuating that the anxieties of her position in so long an engagement were undermining her health, and suggesting that they should be married before Cunningham's departure, to which there only wanted now a few days.

"I thought that matter had been already settled," said the young officer coldly.

"I thought so too: but I am alarmed for Agatha: besides, it makes really very little difference: the marriage would be quite private—no one would know it. Agatha would remain at home with me, and you would go out to your regiment as a single man; but Agatha would be much happier."

This plea, and Mr. Grasset's powers of persuasion prevailed: Cunningham got a few days' farther leave of absence, and the indifferent bridegroom and the unwilling, though loving bride, were married. What were their prospects of happiness? If either asked themselves the question, the drear autumn wind that swept moaningly around the walls where their vows of love and mutual helpfulness were plighted, echoed in their ears a sad and too probable reply.

But there was one face on which unshadowed satisfaction beamed—that of Mr. Grasset: an expression that was, if anything, brightened — though Cunningham looked at them with horror—by the sight of his son-in-law's brother-officers waiting by the church-porch to greet them. Cunningham's hope of concealing his marriage from his regiment vanished at once: two days after, he saw its announcement in the *Times*, and then he felt aware that his marriage was known to his family, and that, whatever might be the penalty, he must be prepared to meet it at once.

A week after their marriage, Cunningham and Agatha parted; he with kindly-expressed wishes for the comfort and happiness of his beautiful bride, she with a thousand affectionate anxieties struggling in her heart, which the consciousness that she was unloved prevented finding utterance.

On Cunningham's arrival at the seaport whence he was to embark, he was met by a letter from his brother, disclaiming him altogether, and throwing him on his own resources. It was no more than he had anticipated, yet it fell as a heavy blow, for it substituted certainty for doubt — the certainty of ruin; for if his income hitherto had barely sufficed for his own wants, how was the trifling pay of a subaltern officer to meet those of a family? And that he was not likely to rise higher for years, he was assured by a letter from the agent, announcing that the purchase-money for his company had been withdrawn by his brother. All that remained for him now was economy, pinching, grinding economy, which must do for him the transmuting process of the alchymist, and make silver go farther than gold had been used to go. Of his ample allowance he had never saved a shilling; so now, on the West Indian station, where he would be alone, he must endeavor to accumulate a little fund with which to commence married life on his return. Wrapped in these reflections, he wandered moodily about, awaiting the departure of the troop-ship, which would not sail for some days. The commanding officer kindly offered him to go home in the interval; but he had no home! The beautiful Priory, where his dignified brother dispensed such stately hospitality, was closed against him, and to Mr. Grasset's cottage he felt as if he could never apply that name. He had not heart to go anywhere lest by encountering some one who knew him, he should be congratulated on bonds that already began to chafe so sorely.

CHAPTER IV.

From this state of mental depression, Cunningham was somewhat unpleasantly aroused by a letter from Mr. Grasset, announcing his arrival that evening with his daughter. "Agatha's health and spirits are failing so rapidly," wrote that gentleman, "that I think it best she should accompany you; and I bring her down prepared for the voyage. Indeed, in every respect I think it best: matrimonial separations are always painful, and, with Agatha's economy, you will be at less expense than by yourself; but we shall miss the dear girl sadly."

Cunningham knew that it was to rid himself of the "dear girl," that this last aggression on him was committed; and he could scarcely summon temper to accord to the travellers a passable reception. But Agatha's pale and drooping aspect, her nervous timidity, and perhaps, more than all, her delicate loveliness, which, a week unseen, seemed to strike on his senses afresh, softened his feelings towards her, until his manner became almost affectionate. But not one grain did they soften to Mr. Grasset, who, ostentatiously unconscious that all was not as it should be, sat conversing with his usual plausible pomposity, while he luxuriously quaffed the claret he knew his son-in-law could so ill afford.

Had Mr. Grasset's heart not been utterly hard and worldly, surely it would have ached as he looked on the two whom his machinations had bound together, as he might already see, for a life of sorrow. Cunningham, so silent, and dark, and moody; Agatha filled with such shrinking timidity, and such an earnest, yet unobtrusive desire not to be troublesome to the husband to whom she felt herself so unwelcome. But Mr. Grasset jested and harangued with all the blindness of one who would not see, and with the same composure, varied by a well-acted burst of sorrow at parting from his daughter. He took his leave, and dismissed them with a hearty "*Bon voyage!*" But he sent them forth without a word to cheer them, on the longer and more eventful voyage over the ocean of life, though he knew their course lay over rocks and among breakers, and that they were in danger of shipwreck on a barren shore. But that was nothing to him; Agatha had now a husband, and it devolved on him to protect and guard her from want and hardship; and Mr. Grasset returned home, rejoicing over the deed he had done, and resolved to marry off his second daughter—in which he very soon succeeded.

Seven years passed, and there was again a stir at Dynebridge, greater almost than that day, so long ago, when the recruiting party had marched into it with their lively music. The new event that had monopolized every thought, and occupied every tongue, was the return of Agatha Grasset to her father's house, accompanied by her husband and her three children, all utterly penniless. All marvelled how Agatha's "grand match" came to end so disastrously. Had they known all, it was the most natural result in the world. What but debts and difficulties were likely to follow Cunningham, with his diminished income and increased responsibilities? And the indifferent heart, that made him devoted to society, but added to them.

In the course of years came four children, and though they brought love with them, they added so greatly to the pressure, that in her anxiety about the future, it was with almost a thankful heart that Agatha laid her best-loved one beneath the palm trees, and thought of its bright home above, in contrast to what they all suffered below. At last there came the step so long looked forward to—Cunningham's commission was sold to defray his debts; and for a time they lived upon the small balance that remained—but that did not last long, and then they were penniless.

Cunningham endeavored to get a situation: but he had no profession, no peculiar aptitude for anything; and the search was a difficult one. He applied to his wealthy brother; but he refused anything, save the advice that he should resort to those to whom he had allied himself, and so, at last, though with an embittered spirit and humiliated heart, Cunningham found himself compelled to do; and with more feeling than was evinced by the wealthy owner of the Priory, Mr. Grasset received them into his home—not kindly, nor without many a well-winged shaft at their poverty; still, he received them. Perhaps by that act of grace, he sought to make some amends to his conscience, which would no longer be silent, but constantly reminded him that this poverty and sorrow were of his own causing, in that he would not patiently await the course of events, but took his daughter's destiny into his own hands.

But amid all these lowering clouds, there was one fair star shone out, and its beam fell on Agatha's heart, with a gladness that enabled her to bear all the rest—she was no longer unloved! In that hard world-struggle, she had conquered her husband's heart, and the strength of that new-born happiness it was that bore them on through their sore extremity.

At length the clouds cleared, and another star shone out; Cunningham obtained a small appointment, and they had again a roof of their own—a very lowly one, it is true; but oh, the happiness of a home to those who have known its want! Round the hearth sit peace and joy, and hope; for, by steadiness and attention, there is a promise of something better in future; and for these Hope Cunningham can pledge himself he has suffered too much to peril the prospect lightly.

THE DYING HUSBAND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

"Yes, I am dying; darkness sweeps
Like a dim pall around my bed:
I look, and lo! the golden hair
Has turned to shadows on thy head.

"I see, as through a tempest cloud,
Thy slender form wave to and fro,
Thy garments gleaming like a shroud,
Sweep downward with a ghostly flow.

"Ah! now I feel thy trembling breath;
I know these arms are folding me,
Closer—still closer! This is death—
My soul looks on eternity!

"Alone within this awful hush,
When all around is dark and chill,
I listen for the tears that gush
From this poor heart—be still, be still!

"Subdue the yearnings of thy grief,
Give death its own sad mastery—
My soul is like an autumn leaf,
Trembling between high heaven and thee.

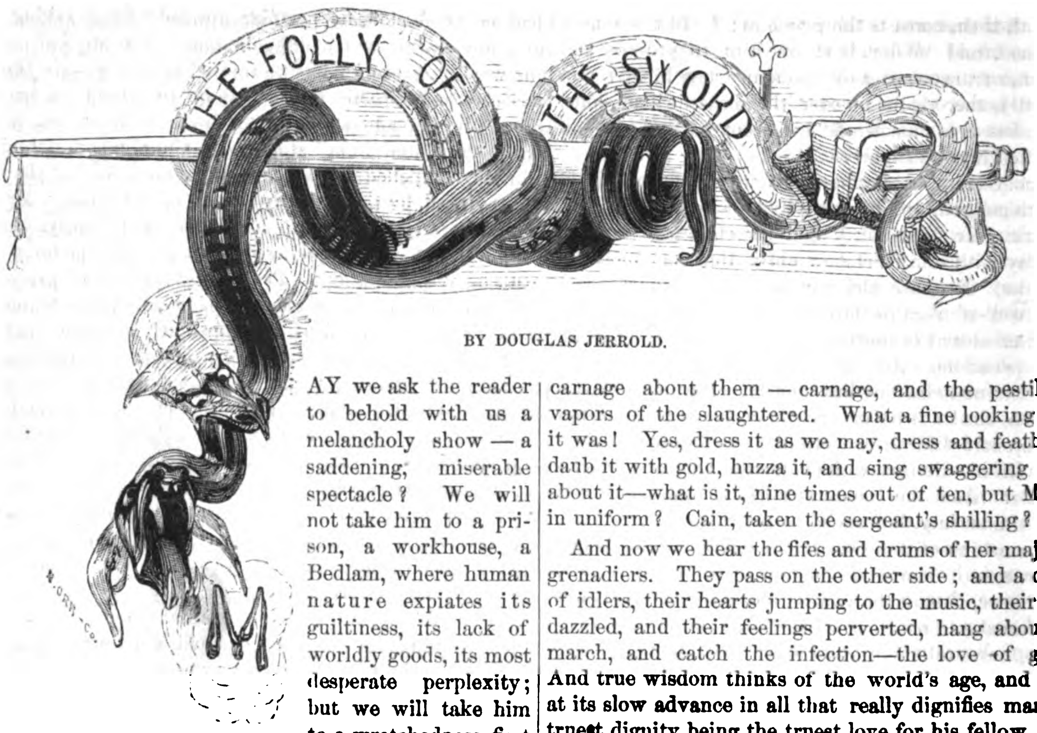
"Nay, waver not, but fold me thus,
Pillowed upon thy faithful breast,—
Ah, let my worn and weary soul
Pass forth to its eternal rest!"

She stills the beating of her heart,
She clasps him in a last embrace,
Her white and trembling fingers part
The damp locks from his pallid face.

And there upon his cold white brow
Her grief in one wild kiss was given,
And press'd as if 'twould draw him back—
Back from the very gates of heaven.

A sigh return'd, that last caress,
As if some spirit from above
Had stirr'd deep waves of tenderness
Within the fountains of his love.

Death yielded to that holy kiss
His grey and gloomy shadows fled,
And smiles of calm seraphic bliss
Stood, like a glory o'er the dead!



THE FOLLY OF THE SWORD

BY DOUGLAS JERROLD.

MAY we ask the reader to behold with us a melancholy show — a saddening, miserable spectacle? We will not take him to a prison, a workhouse, a Bedlam, where human nature expiates its guiltiness, its lack of worldly goods, its most desperate perplexity; but we will take him to a wretchedness, first contrived by wrong, and perpetuated by folly. We will show him the embryo mischief that, in due season, shall be born in the completeness of its terror, and shall be christened with a sounding name, Folly and Wickedness standing sponsors.

We are in St. James's Park. The royal standard of England burns in the summer air—the queen is in London. We pass the palace, and in a few paces are in Birdcage Walk. There, reader, is the miserable show we promised you. There are some fifty recruits, drilled by a sergeant to do homicide cleanly, handsomely. In Birdcage Walk, Glory sits upon her eggs, and hatches eagles!

How very beautiful is the sky above us! What a blessing comes with the fresh, quick air! The trees drawing their green beauty from the earth, quicken our thoughts of the bounteousness of this teeming world. Here, in this nook, this patch, where we yet feel the vibrations of surrounding London—even here, nature, constant in her beauty, blooms and smiles, uplifting the heart of man, if the heart be his to own her.

Now look aside, and contemplate God's image with a musket. Your bosom still expanding with gratitude to nature, for the blessings she has heaped about you, behold the crowning glory of God's work managed like a machine, to slay the image of God — to stain the teeming earth with homicidal blood—to fill the air with howling anguish! Is not yonder row of clowns a melancholy sight? Yet are they the sucklings of Glory — the baby mighty ones of a future Gazette. Reason beholds them with a deep pity. Imagination magnifies them into fiends of wickedness. There is carnage about them — carnage, and the pestilential vapors of the slaughtered. What a fine looking thing it was! Yes, dress it as we may, dress and feather it, daub it with gold, huzza it, and sing swaggering songs about it—what is it, nine times out of ten, but Murder in uniform? Cain, taken the sergeant's shilling?

And now we hear the fifes and drums of her majesty's grenadiers. They pass on the other side; and a crowd of idlers, their hearts jumping to the music, their eyes dazzled, and their feelings perverted, hang about the march, and catch the infection—the love of glory! And true wisdom thinks of the world's age, and sighs at its slow advance in all that really dignifies man, the truest dignity being the truest love for his fellow. And then hope and a faith in human progress contemplate the pageant, its real ghastliness disguised by outward glare and frippery, and know the day will come when the symbols of war will be as the sacred beasts of old Egypt— things to mark the barbarism of by-gone war; melancholy records of the past perversity of human nature.

We can imagine the deep-chested laughter—the look of scorn that would annihilate, and then the small compassion—of the Man of War, at this, the dream of folly, or the wanderings of an inflamed brain. Yet, oh man of war! at this very moment are you shrinking, withering, like an aged giant. The fingers of Opinion have been busy at your plumes—you are not the feathered thing you were; and then that little tube, the goose-quill, has sent its silent shots into your huge anatomy; and the corroding INK, even whilst you look at it and think it shines so brightly, is eating with a tooth of rust into your sword.

That a man should kill a man, and rejoice in the deed —nay gather glory from it—is the act of the wild animal. The force of muscle and dexterity of limb, which make the wild man a conqueror, are deemed in savage life man's highest attributes. The creature, whom in the pride of our Christianity we call heathen and spiritually desolate, has some personal feeling in the strife— he kills his enemy, and then, making an oven of hot stones, bakes his dead body, and for crowning satisfaction, eats it. His enemy becomes a part of him: his glory is turned to nutriment; and he is content. What barbarism! Field-marshals sicken at the horror; nay, troopers shudder at the tale, like a fine lady at a toad.

In what, then, consists the prime evil? In the murder, or the meal? Which is the most hideous deed—to kill a man, or to cook and eat the man when killed?

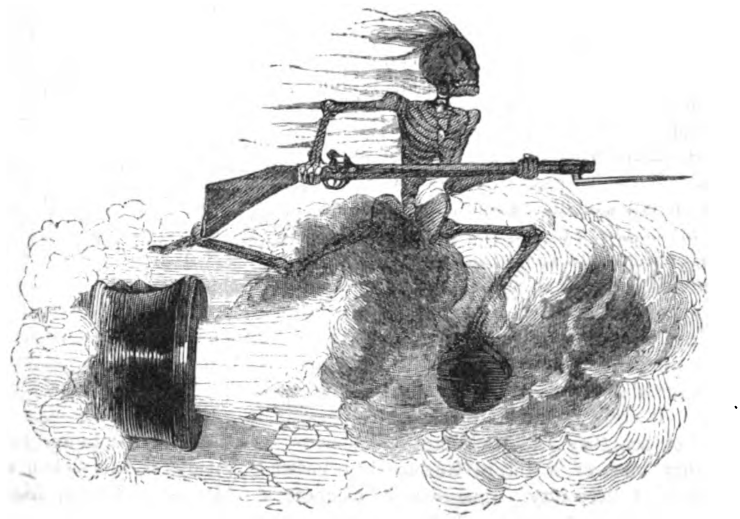
But softly, there is no murder in the case. The craft of a man has made a splendid ceremony of homicide—has invested it with dignity. He slaughters with flags flying, drums beating, trumpets braying. He kills according to method, and has worldly honors for his grim handiwork. He does not, like the unchristian savage, carry away with him mortal trophies from the skulls of his enemies. No; the alchemy or magic of authority turns his well-won scalps into epaulets, or hangs them in stars and crosses at his button-hole; and then, the battle over—the dead not eaten, but carefully buried—and the maimed and mangled howling and blaspheming in hospitals—the meek Christian warrior marches to church, and reverently folding his sweet and spotless hands, sings *Te Deum*. Angels waft his fervent thanks to God, to whose footstool—on his own faith—he has so lately sent his shuddering thousands. And this spirit of destruction working within him is canonized by the craft and ignorance of men, and worshipped as glory!

And this religion of the sword—this dazzling heathenism, that makes a pomp of wickedness—seizes and distracts us, even on the threshold of life. Swords and drums are our baby playthings; the types of violence and destruction are made the pretty pastime of our childhood; and as we grow older, the outward magnificence of the ogre Glory—his trappings and his trumpets, his privileges, and the songs that are shouted in his praise—ensnare the bigger baby to his sacrifice. Hence, slaughter becomes an exalted profession; the marked, distinguished employment of what, in the jargon of the world, is called a gentleman.

But for this craft operating upon this ignorance, who—in the name of outraged God—would become the hireling of the Sword? Hodge, poor fellow, enlists. He wants work; or he is idle, dissolute. Kept, by the injustice of the world, as ignorant as the farm-yard swine, he is the better instrument for the world's craft. His ear is tickled with the fife and drum; or he is drunk; or the sergeant—the lying valet of glory—tells a good tale, and already Hodge is a warrior in the rough. In a fortnight's time you may see him at Chatham; or, indeed, he was one of those we marked in Birdcage Walk. Day by day, the sergeant works at the block ploughman, and chipping and chipping, at length carves out a true, handsome soldier of the line.—What knew Hodge of the responsibility of man? What dreams had he of the self-accountability of the human spirit? He has become the lackey of carnage, the liveried footman, at a few pence per day of fire and blood. The musket-stock which for many an hour he hugs—hugs in sulks and weariness—was no more a party to its present use, than was Hodge. That piece of walnut is the fragment of a tree which might have given shade and fruit for another century; homely rustic people gathering under it. Now, it is the instrument of wrong and violence; the working tool of slaughter. Tree and man, are not their destinies as one?

And is Hodge alone of benighted mind? Is he alone deficient of that knowledge of moral right and wrong which really and truly crowns the man, king of himself? When he surrenders up his nature, a mere machine with human pulses, to do the bidding of war, has he taken counsel with his own reflection—does he know the limit of the sacrifice? He has taken the shilling, and he knows the facings of his uniform.

When the born and bred gentleman, to keep to coined and current terms, pays down his thousand pounds or so, for his commission, what incites to the purchase? It may be the elegant idleness of the calling; it may be the



bullion and glitter of the **regimentals**; or, devout worshipper, it may be an unquenchable thirst for glory. From the moment that his name stars the Gazette, what does he become? The bond-servant of war. Instantly he ceases to be a judge between moral right and moral injury. It is his duty not to think, but to obey. He has given up, surrendered to another, the freedom of his soul: he has dethroned the majesty of his own will. He must be active in wrong, and see not the injustice; shed blood for craft and usurpation, calling bloodshed valor. He may be made, by the iniquity of those who use him, the burglar and the brigand; but glory calls him pretty names for his prowess, and the wicked weakness of the world shouts and acknowledges them. And is this the true condition of reasonable man? Is it by such means that he best vindicates the greatness of his mission here? Is he, when he most gives up the free motions of his own soul—is he then most glorious?

A few months ago, chance showed us a band of ruffians, who, as it afterwards appeared, were intent upon most desperate mischief. They spread themselves over the country, attacking, robbing, murdering all who fell into their hands. Men, women, and children, all suffered alike. Nor were the villains satisfied with this. In their wanton ruthlessness, they set fire to cottages, and tore up and destroyed plantations. Every footpace of their march was marked with blood and desolation.

Who are these wretches?—you ask. What place did they ravage? Were they not caught, and punished?

They were a part of the army of Africa; valorous Frenchmen, bound for Algiers, to cut Arab throats; and in the name of glory, and for the everlasting honor of France, to burn, pillage, and despoil; and all for national honor—all for glory?

But Glory cannot dazzle Truth. Does it not at times appear no other than a highwayman, with a pistol at a nation's breast? A burglar, with a crow-bar, entering a kingdom. Alas! in this world, there is no Old Bailey for nations. Otherwise, where would have been the crowned heads that divided Poland? Those felon monarchs, anointed to—steal? It is true the historian claps the cut-purse conqueror in the dock, and he is tried by the jury of posterity. *He* is past the verdict, yet is not its damnatory voice lost upon generations. For thus is the world taught—albeit slowly taught—true glory; when that which passed for virtue is truly tested to be vile; when the hero is hauled from the car, and fixed for ever in the pillory.

But war brings forth the heroism of the soul: war tests the magnanimity of man. Sweet is the humanity that spares a fallen foe; gracious the compassion that tends his wounds, that brings even a cup of water to his burning lips. Granted. But is there not heroism of a grander mould?—The heroism of forbearance? Is not the humanity that refuses to strike, a nobler virtue than the late pity born of violence? Pretty is it to see the victor with salve and lint kneeling at his bloody trophy—a maimed and agonized fellow-man,—but surely it had been better to withhold the blow, than to have been first mischievous, to be afterwards humane.

That nations, professing a belief in Christ, should couple glory with war, is monstrous blasphemy. Their faith, their professing faith, is—"love one another:" their practice is to—cut throats; and more, to bribe and hoodwink men to the wickedness, the trade of blood is magnified into a virtue. We pray against battle, and glorify the deeds of death. We say, beautiful are the ways of peace, and then cocker ourselves upon our perfect doings in the art of man-slaying. Let us then cease to pay the sacrifice of admiration to the demon—War; let us not acknowledge him as a mighty and majestic principle, but, at the very best, a grim and melancholy necessity.

But there always has been—there always will be, war. It is inevitable; it is a part of the condition of human society. Man has always made glory to himself from the destruction of his fellow, and so it will continue. It may be very pitiable; would it were otherwise! But so it is, and there is no helping it.

Happily, we are slowly killing this destructive fallacy. A long breathing-time of peace has been fatal to the dread magnificence of glory. Science and philosophy—*povera e nuda filosofia!*—have made good their claims, inducing man to believe that he may vindicate the divinity of his nature otherwise than by perpetrating destruction. He begins to think there is a better glory in the communication of triumphs of mind, than in the clash of steel and roar of artillery. At the present moment, a society, embracing men of distant nations—"natural enemies," as the old, wicked cant of the old patriotism had it—is at work, plucking the plumes from Glory, unbracing his armor, and divesting the ogre of all that dazzled foolish and unthinking men, showing the rascal in his natural hideousness, in all his base deformity. Some, too, are calculating the cost of Glory's table: some showing what an appetite the demon has, devouring at a meal the substance of ten thousand sons of industry—yea, eating up the wealth of kingdoms. And thus, by degrees, are men beginning to look upon this god, Glory, as no more than a finely-trapped Sawney Bean,—a monster and a destroyer—a nuisance; a noisy lie.

TO STAND GODFATHER.

There are everywhere social customs which may be regarded as so many snares laid for the incautious inhabitant or the ignorant foreigner; but no country is so rich in this respect as *la belle France*. Having been lately the victim of one of these traditional traps, I will describe it here, in order to warn others against it.

Being a bachelor of a certain age, I occupied a snug little apartment on the third floor of a nice house or *hôtel*, as the *concierge* used to call it, in the Faubourg St. Honoré. The first floor, a very splendid suite of rooms, was occupied by M. and Madame de Poupart, an interesting young couple, whose acquaintance I had the honor of making through a common female friend, Madame de Grandville. Having once or twice dined at their table, madame was thereupon kind enough to bestow on me the agreeable title of an *ami de la maison;* and I was at the time rather proud of this circumstance, little thinking how much the distinction would cost me.

One evening, I was comfortably seated in my *fauteuil à la Voltaire*, perusing one of those papers which are read with as little attention as they are written by the journalists themselves, and which Lamartine has described as *cet écho du matin que le soir on oublie*, when the bell rang at my door. On opening, I recognized my first-floor neighbor, the amiable M. de Poupart; and after the usual salutations, the following conversation took place between us:—

"Excuse me, sir," said M. de Poupart, "for interrupting you at so late an hour; and an apology is the more necessary, because I am about to commit an indiscretion."

"I am glad to hear it," said I; "for I was afraid at first some misfortune might have happened to madame."

"Oh, no, thank you; she is as well as can be expected in her situation; for I have come to say, that since the afternoon I have had the good-fortune to become the father of a most beautiful baby—a chubby, rosy little fellow."

"I am glad to hear it: pray accept for both madame and you my best congratulations and most sincere good wishes."

"A thousand thanks," said my obliging neighbor; "and in connection with that happy event, I have just something very trifling to ask of you. My good wife, as you must be aware, is a little inclined to superstition, and the convent-education she received has not done much towards lessening that disposition. You may imagine with what anxiety she pondered over the future destinies of our expected first-born, and touching them she consulted a famous somnambulist, who predicted that the baby would be very fortunate if it had a happy godfather. We have been on the look-out ever since among our friends and acquaintances for the most prosperous. But this is difficult: one has too many children; another none at all; a third has a cross wife; a fourth has speculated in the funds: in short, there is not one in the whole circle who would exclaim, with Candide's metaphysical pedagogue, that all is for the best in this best of worlds. At length it struck Madame Poupart that you are a true child of fortune—a thoroughly lucky man." — I acknowledged the compliment by bowing in silence.—"Yes, you—a bachelor, without cares or anxieties of any kind, enjoying good health and a fine independence—you stand in the very sunshine of fortune; and, therefore, I ask you, in my own name and that of my wife, to stand godfather to our child."

At first I declined politely, thinking the request a little curious; but M. de Poupart called it a trifle—although he should feel much obliged; and there is always something so touching even in maternal weakness and superstition, that I assented at last. As Roman Catholics are accustomed to baptize their children as soon as possible, the ceremony was fixed for the next day but one, and was to take place at the venerable church of St. Roch. There was no time to be lost; and, being thoroughly ignorant of French manners and usages, I applied the next morning to Madame de Grandville, and begged her to tell me what I was to do. She was exceedingly kind; assured me that the invitation was a token of high consideration on the part of M. and Madame de Poupart, and said there was nothing at all to do but to make a few trifling presents. Besides, I was to enjoy the good-fortune of having one of the most elegant and beautiful young ladies of Paris—that is to say, her own dear niece—as partner in the ceremony, for she was to stand godmother. The obliging lady immediately wrote a memorandum of what was wanted, addressed to the director of La Belle Jardinière, a very fashionable establishment of *nouveautés*, as the Parisians call it. She would look after the rest herself. I returned thanks, took the *billet*, and drove hastily to the elegant shop.

A very engaging *demoiselle de boutique* (at home we call her a shop-woman) read the letter, and shewed me at once a charming godchild's basket. It was lovely indeed, but it cost £4. Nothing else would do, said the pretty demoiselle, and so I took it. Then she herself chose a beautiful-box, the perfume of which was exquisite, and filled it gracefully with two dozen pairs of fine gloves, two fans—one a precious antique, and the other an artistic modern one—several phials of essences, and a necklace of Turkish pearls. She handed me at the same time a handsome bill—written on glazed paper, adorned with an engraving in gold—and the different items amounting to £17. I did not dare to raise an objection, as this pretty box was destined for my elegant partner, and I took, reluctantly, I must confess, twenty-one napoleons out of my purse.

I thought this was behaving pretty well, and went triumphantly to Madame de Grandville, who did not look absolutely delighted.

"The box," she remarked, "though not at all rich, is handsome, and I hope your fair lady will receive it with pleasure. But see, here are the beautiful little presents I have bought for you to give the *accouchée:* fifty francs worth of *bonbons* and sweets of the best description, to fill the basket and divide among the guests; a bronze night-lamp by Cain, and a silver bowl engraved by Froment-Meurice—the two for twenty louis: you could not offer less to a lady of fifty thousand francs a year; for the nurse, a cap of real lace, five louis—a mere nothing; for the nursery-maid, this French shawl—that is enough for her. I should have liked to buy something besides for the baby, but we must do things as simply as possible."

I stood amazed. It cost me more than £100, that Madame de Poupart had consulted a somnambulist, and thought me a lucky fellow. And, besides, there lay before me a frightful series of *étrennes*, to be given every year to my blessed godchild. But what could I do? The pill was bitter indeed, but I was obliged to swallow it with the best grace I could. I had pledged my word, and fallen into the snare.

The happy day arrived, and in the morning I received a beautiful bouquet from Madame de Grandville's elegant niece. I thought it ugly, for it cost too much. I had the honor of fetching the blooming lady in a carriage, and we drove to the church; the godmother having put my necklace of Turkish pearls round her fair neck, and I holding her flowers in my hand. My costly presents had been thankfully received by the young mother, the nurse, and the nursery-maid, and my good taste was much applauded. In the church, a new series began. Before the child was christened, I had to give a wax-taper to the *curé*, an offering to the *vicaire*, *pour-boires* to the sexton, the choristers, the *suisse*, the sacristan, the door-keeper, the giver of holy-water; besides alms for the poor of the parish, the wants of the church, the missions, the convents, &c. I thought it would never come to an end. At last the baby was duly received into the Christian community, and we went away, the suisse preceding us with great pomp, and striking his cane against the pavement of the holy building in a masterly way. I hung my head, for my purse was empty; and, besides, I had the mortification to see that another name than mine was entered in the parish-register, because I did not belong to the Catholic persuasion, and to hear that my godchild did not even bear my name: for who in France would consent to have a son called Peter? Désiré-Eugène is much prettier and more modern.

So I had spent about 120 guineas for a compliment from Madame de Poupart, a courtesy from the nurse, a nosegay from the godmother, and a flourish from a suisse with a cocked-hat. I found these rather expensive honors, and declared inwardly, like the poor raven in La Fontaine's fable, *Mais un peu tard, qu'on ne m'y prendrait plus.*

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TOO SHREWD BY HALF;

OR, CONCEIT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

A FRENCH INCIDENT.

SEVERAL years since, two young men stopped at the inn at Montaign, waiting for the coach that was to take them on to Fontenay. One of them, who was dressed in a blouse of unbleached linen, had hanging from a crossed shoulder belt a gourd encased in wicker-work, and a tin box, adapted for holding botanical specimens, while in his hand he carried a geological hammer. His open countenance beamed with health and good humor, while that of his companion was bilious and anxious looking. The latter wore an elegant travelling costume; but a pair of large blue spectacles concealed his eyes, and by no means tended to improve the expression of his face. He had just opened a letter, and was preparing to read it for his friend.

"Is it from your cousin, Colonel Leclerc?" asked the latter.

"From his wife. I will read it for you.

"'MY DEAR FRANCOIS—As soon as you receive this letter, set out to come to us. The new prefect of La Vendée is to pass a few days here. You know, of course, that his name is Vernon, that he is brother to the minister of justice, and that the place of attorney-general, which you are seeking, will be infallibly granted on his recommendation. Come, then, and try to meet his approbation. He is a man of quiet, simple habits, who never assumes authority except when he wishes to confer a benefit or to redress a wrong. He is coming to our house in order to enjoy a few days' relaxation. My husband did not forget to put in a good word for you in his last letter; but M. Vernon replied that he must see you and judge for himself. Your success, therefore, will entirely depend on the impression you make on him, and I hope it will be a favorable one.

"'Your affectionate cousin,

"'LUCY LECLERC.'

"You see, my dear Naquet," continued the embryo official, as he folded the letter, "that I have every reason to hope for success."

"Certainly," answered the young naturalist; "it seems to be highly probable that M. Vernon will obtain your nomination."

"You say that very coldly, André."

"Because I feel frightened at the difficult and delicate functions you will have to fulfill. You, Francis, being the representative of public morality, will hold in your hands the honor of individuals and the repose of families. In such a position, small faults will become great, and an error will be treated as a crime."

"Oh, you may make yourself easy on that score," interrupted Blondel, with a self-sufficient air. "Besides the close study that I have made of human nature, I have an instinct that seldom or never deceives me."

"Take care," said André, shaking his head; "what is called an *instinct* or an *impression* is frequently nothing but a hasty judgment, the result of former prejudice. We mistake for a sudden mysterious illumination, what is really nothing but the suggestion of our own good or bad humor. We then seek to justify our opinion, keeping out of sight whatever may tend to invalidate it, and thus laboriously deceive ourselves with imaginary proofs. This method of proceeding is dangerous for all, but especially for him who has to administer the law."

Blondel smiled.

"All depends on one's powers of observation," said he, confidently. "A mind continually awake observes the slightest circumstances, and draws inductions from the smallest details. It is with men as with the geological basins which you study, my dear Naquet. When the upper strata are known, it is easy to guess at those that lie beneath. An attorney-general, you perceive, ought to scrutinize all whom he sees, remark their words, their movements, and *class* them as you do the plants you meet. A practised eye can turn a man inside out, like a glove. What favors the greater part of the disorders of society is the indifference and inattention of those who ought to watch over it. See in this country, for example, the greater number of the insurgent royalist leaders have not been arrested."

"Because they hide themselves."

"Let me be once appointed, and I'll engage to capture them all within a month."

The young men's conversation was here interrupted by the arrival of the vehicle which was to take them to Fontenay. The postillion wore a small hat, a brown vest, and striped pantaloons—the costume so well known during the wars of the *blues* and the *brigands*. He looked at the two travellers with that prudent, silent attention so characteristic of the Vendean peasants.

"At what hour this evening shall we arrive?" asked Blondel.

"At what hour?" repeated the peasant. "That depends on circumstances, master: to go fast, one must have, as they say, smooth roads and good horses."

"But, at all events, we shall arrive before nightfall?"

"Most likely; the days are long."

"Are we to be the only travellers?"

"Don't be uneasy: the coach is large enough."

The said coach was a sort of long covered wagon; and the postillion, as he spoke, opened the leathern apron in front.

"Take the best places, gentlemen," he said; "in front you'll have air, and you'll see the country: I will be back in a moment." And, jerking backwards the horse which was impatient to start, "Quiet, *pataud*,* quiet!" he cried; "stand! I'm going for my whip." He raised the corner of the apron, fastened the reins inside it, and went into the inn. Blondel looked after him.

"Did you remark that man?" said he to his companion: "I'll wager that he belongs to the insurgents."

"Why do you think so?"

"His manner, his dress, his evasive way of answering my questions, and the name of *pataud*, which he gave his horse."

Naquet burst out laughing.

"Why, Francis, one ought to have a care how one meets you in your official rambles. You *botanise* on men, pick them to pieces, as I do wild flowers."

Just then the postillion reappeared.

"Get on!" he shouted to his horse; and, jumping on the driving-seat, he set of at a round pace. After they had passed the suburbs of Montaign, a traveller seated at the road-side stood up and made a signal to the driver. The latter immediately pulled up.

"Ah, master, I was looking for you," said he, as he got down.

"And I was waiting for you, my lad: you're late."

"I had to deliver the letters you gave me. You're not afraid to travel in the twilight?"

"On the contrary, I like to avoid the heat."

"There's more than one of your mind in this country," said the peasant, with a significant wink. "No matter; we'll soon make up for lost time."

"Very good," said the new-comer; and having saluted the two young men, he took his place on the farthest seat of the wagon, remarking that he disliked the sunshine. Struck by this, Blondel set himself to watch him attentively.

He was a man of about forty years old, with well formed features and intelligent eyes. His dress was that of a sportsman, well made and of fine material. No doubt the walk he had taken had fatigued him; for, leaning back in the corner of the wagon, he drew his cap over his eyes, and seemed to fall asleep.

Francis immediately turned to the driver: "You did not tell us we were to have this travelling companion," he said, in a whisper.

"Why, have you not got room enough?" laughed the postillion.

"Oh, yes!"

"Well, then, where's the odds? You may see that he's a respectable traveller like yourselves."

"You know him, then?"

"From having seen him yesterday at the inn, when he gave me some commissions to do for him."

"But you know his name?"

"Do I know yours? My business is to carry people in my wagon, and not names in my head." So saying, the driver, apparently weary of Francis's questions, whipped on his horses and began to whistle. A long silence ensued. It was broken at length by Naquet asking the name of a village through which they were passing.

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* A nickname bestowed by the Vendean peasants on the *blues*, or republican soldiers. It literally means a sort of mongrel dog with thick legs.

"Les Herbiers," answered their fellow-traveller, who was now awake.

"Right," said the postillion. "The mayor of it is my relative."

"M. Lariot."

"Ah! so you know him?"

"A *blue*, as they say in this country," said the other, smiling.

The driver shrugged his shoulders.

"Well! every one has his weak point. Lariot has served; but it does not hinder his being an honest man, incapable of hurting those who do not think with him."

"I know—I understand," replied the stranger, smiling; "Loriot is an indulgent man, and he is right; but for his good sense, there would be bloodshed in the parish."

"That's true," said the driver.

"His prudence shall not be forgotten," muttered the stranger to himself.

Blondel had been listening attentively.

"I see that monsieur belongs to this country," said he, fixing his eyes on the stranger.

"I do not," was the reply.

"I should have supposed you did, from your acquaintance with the places and the people. But from what I have just heard, it would seem that the royalists are rife in this canton."

"So they are throughout La Vendee."

"It seems very extraordinary that the local magistrates do not show more zeal in the fulfillment of their duty."

The stranger replied only by a slight gesture.

"How does it happen," continued Blondel, looking fixedly at him, "that the leaders of the last insurrection have not all been arrested?"

"Because, apparently, the matter is not so easy as you imagine. The royalist leaders don't go about the roads with their names writen on their hats; and, despite all your watchfulness, you might jostle one of them without recognizing him."

"Perhaps you are wrong there," said Blondel significantly.

The stranger bowed. "I shall not attempt," he said, in a slightly ironical tone, "to impugn monsieur's penetration."

Francis bit his lips, and the conversation dropped.

Night had fallen, and the wagon rolled slowly along the deserted road. The wind had risen, and whistled with a mournful tone across the heath. Occasionally, a tall cross, looming through the darkness, indicated as it does in Roman Catholic countries, the place of some recent murder, whose story the postillion did not fail to relate. Although the insurrection had been put down, bands of outlaws were still roaming through the district, and this was by no means an unlikely place to encounter one. Naquet half seriously, half in jest, made a remark to this effect to Blondel.

"And we have no arms," replied the future attorney-general.

"Very fortunately," interrupted the stranger.

"Why so, monsieur?"

"If we should be attacked, it would be too suddenly and by too great a number to render resistance of the least avail. In such a case, the best plan is always to submit quietly, and leave vengeance for a future opportunity."

They had now reached the foot of a long steep ascent, and the postillion requested the travellers to get out and walk. As soon as the two friends found themselves apart from their companion, Blondel said: "Did you perceive the drift of his advice?"

"Certainly; I thought it very wise."

"But not very comforting: we shall probably be attacked."

"Why do you tkink so?"

"Don't you see that our driver is a *chouan*?"*

"Bah!"

"And our fellow traveller a royalist chief?"

"Stuff! Do you think an outlaw would venture to travel in a public conveyance? What has put such a thing into your head?"

"What! Were you not struck with his appearance? Whence does he come? Where is he going? What is his name?"

"All questions that he might as fairly ask respecting ourselves."

"But did you not remark the embarrassment of the driver when I questioned him, and the anxiety of the stranger to hide himself in the farthest corner of the wagon?"

"In order to shelter himself from the sun."

"And why did he not get up, as we did at the inn?"

"Because he chose to have a walk first."

Blondel shrugged his shoulders.

"The sun! a walk! you believe all that! And now tell me how it comes that, if he does not belong to this country, he happens to know the places and the people so well."

"I can't say."

"Well, Naquet, my impressions seldom deceive me, and here I have proofs. This man I tell you is a royalist chief—very likely the leader of them all."

"Come, come, Francis, you allow your imagination to carry you too far."

"Well, we shall see: you are at liberty to shut your eyes, but I choose to walk with mine open, and will act accordingly."

By this time they had passed the hill and the three travellers resumed their places. Soon afterwards, the sound of a horse galloping was heard. The stranger raised the leathern curtain that hung in the back of the wagon, and called out: "Pierre, is it you?"

"Yes, master."

"You will ride on before, and wait for me."

"Yes, master." And the rider trotted on briskly.

"Who is that man?" asked Naquet.

"My servant," replied the stranger.

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* A sort of owl. It was a nickname given to the Vendean royalists, because they used to imitate the cry of the owl, as a signal amongst themselves.

Blondel touched his friend with his elbow.

"Do you still doubt?" he whispered. "There is certainly an ambuscade prepared for us, and that fellow has ridden on to announce our approach."

"Why should you think so?"

Blondel made a gesture of contempt.

"The pistol would touch your breast before you would think of danger," whispered he. "Remember our tutor's old adage, 'Forewarned, forearmed.' Luckily I am here, and I promise you I won't let them have their own way."

"Are we not approaching a village?" he asked aloud.

"Yes, St. Hermione," said the postillion.

"Don't we stop here?"

"Just as the gentlemen please," replied the driver.

"It would be a useless delay," said the stranger.

"Then we'll go on," said the driver.

"No," said Blondel, decidedly.

"We are only an hour distant from Fontenay: it would be better to get on there without stopping."

"Excuse me, monsieur," said Francis, firmly; "my friend and I choose to stop here. And this, I see, is an inn," he added, as they came up to a house, with a signboard in front.

"That's not where I stop," said the driver, preparing to pass on.

"But it is where *I* stop," retorted the young man, angrily, seizing the reins. "Pull up here, I desire you."

The peasant obeyed, but with a bad grace. The two young men got down alone.

"*He* does not follow us," whispered Blondel. "He's afraid to show himself."

"More likely he is annoyed at this delay," replied Naquet.

Blondel shook his head. They entered the kitchen of the inn; and while warming themselves before the cheerful fire, a sound of clashing arms made them turn round. A *gendarme* walked up to them with the usual demand: "Your papers!"

Blondel and Naquet handed their passports, which the honest functionary unfolded and looked over with an eye which the fumes of wine had visibly obscured.

"Good!" cried he, putting his finger on the seal. "All right, my brave fellows! You're none of the *chouans* that I am looking for—for there's no lack of them in this country—the gallows-birds! But we'll start them from their nests! Were you the only travellers?"

"No," replied Blondel: "we had a companion, who would not get out of the wagon."

"Ho, ho! Did he want to conceal himself?"

"He may have good reasons for so doing," said the young man.

The brigadier went up close to him.

"Have you any idea, citizen, who he is?" asked he, confidentially.

"I would have you examine him with care," was the mysterious reply.

The *gendarme* left the room, but reappeared in a moment.

"No more a traveller in the wagon than in my cartouch box," he said.

"Then he must have taken to flight!"

"Flight!" repeated the brigadier; "where's the driver?"

"Here," cried he, walking in.

"What have you done with your third traveller?"

"*Ma foi!* when he saw the others getting down, he set off by himself."

"Set off?" cried Blondel, turning to the *gendarme*. "No doubt he saw you, and was afraid of being arrested."

"Why, what do you suppose him to be?"

"A *chouan*."

"What's that you say, master?" asked the postillion.

"Don't attend to that man's representations," cried Blondel, eagerly, "I'm certain the other is a royalist chief, and you ought to make sure of him."

"That I will!" exclaimed the brigadier, darting out of the inn.

"See what you have done," said Naquet to Blondel: "you have denounced a perfect stranger on a parcel of vague suspicions."

"I tell you, the fellow is an insurgent leader."

"But consider——"

"We shall see. I shall not be sorry to prove to you in this instance, the possibility of arresting a specious looking criminal, just by being on the alert."

A musket-shot was heard. Both the young men rushed out of the inn, follow by all the people of the place. They soon perceived the *gendarme*, dragging the stranger along by the collar.

"You fired?" cried Naquet.

"Oh! merely to warn this gentleman to stop," said the *gendarme*.

"Monsieur is not wounded?"

"Happily not," replied the stranger; "but I await an explanation of such conduct."

"That's easily given, my prince," said the *gendarme*; "you are arrested as a suspected character, and because this gentleman has dsicovered that you are an insurgent leader."

"I!"

"If it be not so, you can easily disprove the charge," said Blondel.

"And may I ask what has caused you to suspect me?"

The young man in reply recapitulated all that had passed, and rendered his account a very clever piece of special pleading.

"And so it is on such vague presumptions that you have ventured to base your judgment, monsieur, and have thus exposed me to this man's violence. I think I have a right to inquire who you are yourself."

The young man told his name, and the stranger started.

"Blondel!" repeated he. "Are you not cousin to General Leclerc?"

"Yes."

"And are you not soliciting the post of attorney general?"

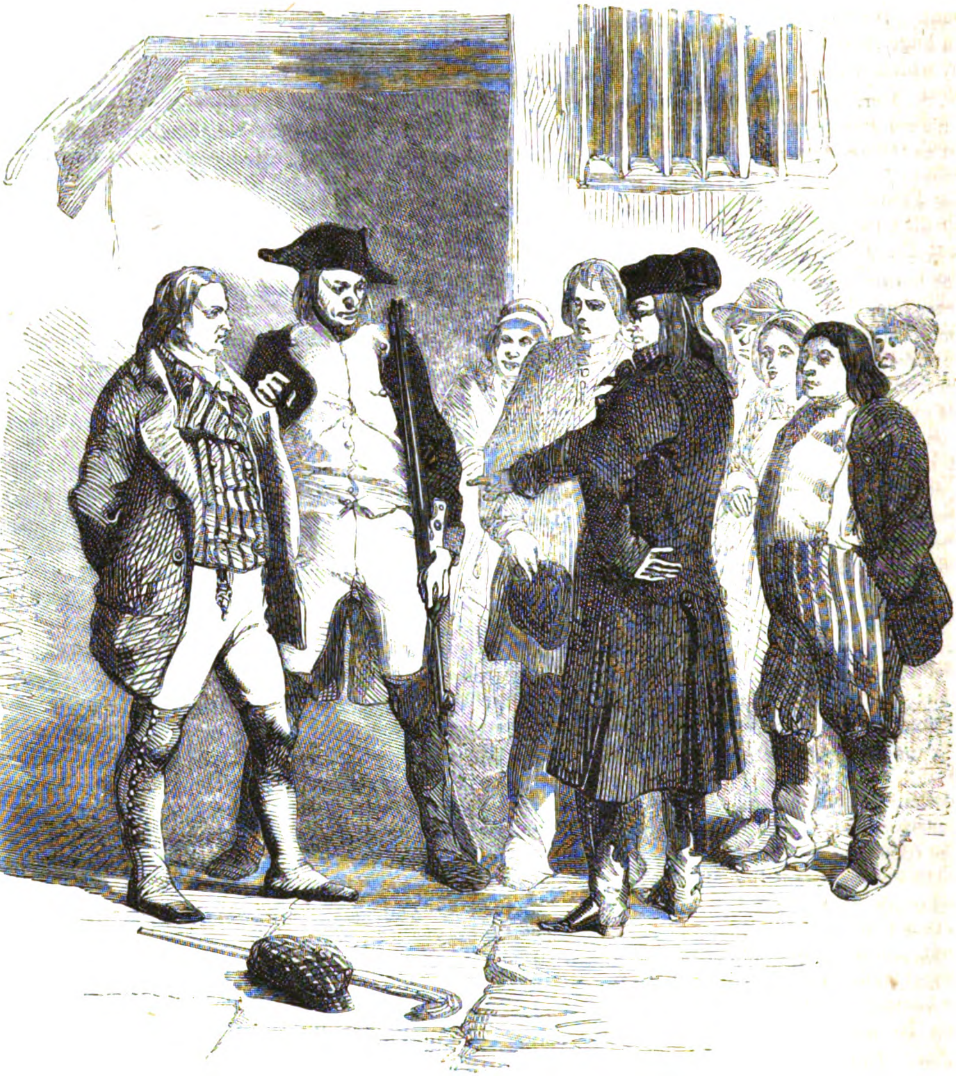
"How can you possibly know that?"

The stranger smiled. "Your family is not unknown to me," he said: "look there!" And he showed him a letter, in whose address Francis recognized his cousin's writing. It was directed to M. Vernon.

"The prefect!" cried the astonished Blondel.

Every one present uttered an exclamation of surprise, and the brigadier prepared to make his escape.

"Remain!" said M. Vernon, in a severe tone. "It was fortunate for you, monsieur, that your brutal mistake affected me in place of another: I have a right to pardon you in my own case. As to M. Blondel," added he, turning towards the disconcerted young man, "a time, I hope, may come when he will perceive that being too prompt to think evil of our neighbours is far less a proof of perspicuity than of malevolence; and that, before receiving a legal right to accuse others, it is needful to possess both prudence and impartiality.



Francis bowed profoundly, and began to mutter some excuses; but without listening to him, M. Vernon saluted Naquet politely, and resumed his journey to Fontenay. Scarcely had he departed, when the brigadier, thoroughly sobered by the fright he had had, advanced towards Blondel with clenched fists, exclaiming: "It's my turn now to give you a thrashing!"

Naquet stopped him.

"Be quiet said he gently; "my friend's error has been sufficiently punished."

"Punished!" cried the *gendarme*; "and my situation, which I all but lost through him!"

"Yes," said Naquet, in a low voice: "but you saved yours, and he has just lost his!"

THE HEADSMAN'S TALE.

A STORY I HEARD IN MUNICH.

"MORE punch? By all means, and this time let it be a tri-fle stiffer."

There was a Frenchman, a German, and your humble servant. We were sitting round—not the fire, alas!—but a huge stove of white china tiles, with a little iron door, which, when opened to the widest, gave us the comfort of a mere blink at the fire. The Frenchman was a jolly fellow, the German was a jolly fellow, and, without vanity, I believe I may say we were all jolly fellows.

The Frenchman was in love. Not that that made much difference in him. What is something, however, is, that the Frenchman, besides being in love, had the toothache, which fully accounts for two intimate chums partaking of his hot punch round his celibatarian Penates. The German might have been in love too (most Germans are so), but he did not mention it; and melancholically stolid as he appeared, I do not feel at liberty to assert the fact. One thing is certain, that we were discussing the difference of the customs of our respective countries, and smoking short clays.

"You don't mean to say," cried the Frenchman, "that you are barbaric enough to cut off your criminals' heads with a sword?"

This was to the German, who replied—"Indeed, I cannot regret that the refinements of the guillotine have never found their way into Bavaria. Executions are so rare in this country, that we have never felt the want of a steam decapitator, as Marat must have done. But here the headsman is still a hated and despised character, and the difficulty of finding a man to fill the office, obliges the corporation to pay him handsomely. He has to practise regularly on a number of round blocks, piled one above the other, to about the height of six feet. The topmost one represents the head of the culprit, and the summit of the art is to wield the heavy sword so nicely, that it shall pass between that and the one below it, without disturbing either."

"One would almost think you had filled the office yourself, you describe it so graphically," said I.

"Nay, the fact is, that when first a student, I lodged in the house of a man who had once been chief executioner. He was a strange man, six feet two, and as strong as an athlete; but he never held his head up. He used to go about his business (he was a shoemaker) with his eyes cast down, and as melancholy a look as Pausanias when he had stabbed his wife in the dark. He was a single man, and I was his only lodger. I took a fancy to him from his sheer loneliness, and I think he took a liking to me. At any rate, I managed one sly day to get him by the fire in the kitchen, and worm out his story from him. Would you like to hear it?"

With an expression of great delight, the Gallic invalid exclaimed, "*Allons*, some more punch before you begin."

In the simple words of its first narrator the German then retailed

THE HEADSMAN'S TALE.

There's not a prettier village in all the Bavarian Tyrol—so *I* think, at least—than that of Schlier-See. Here you have a calm lake, with water as green as the grass at your feet, and then beyond, you have the Spitzen-Zug on one side, and the Gamsbock-Alma on the other, both of them towering right up into the sky, and covered with snow all the year round, and a valley running up between them, where you cannot see the light of the sun for trees. Then, just at the brink of the lake, at the foot of the two mountains, there's the church of St. Leonard, where, once a year, they bring all the horses of the neighboring villages, and drive them three times round it, to insure them the blessing of the good saint for the next twelve months. And, though some of these townspeople may laugh at it, I never knew a mare yet that had the glanders, if she had been driven properly round, and had not stumbled in turning. Well, in this village I was born, and lived there till I was sixteen. Well, sir, I have not been there since, nor shall I ever go. You ask me why, and I'll tell you, though it's a long tale.

The village is but a small one, and when I was a boy there were but three or four others of my age in it. My father was the forester or gamekeeper, and well I remember the carving of St. Hubert kneeling before the stag, with a cross between its horns, that had stood for many a year above our door. The office of forester was once a very honorable one, but the game had become scarce; the chamois had nearly disappeared from the hills, and my father was a poor man. My bosom friend was Anthon—Tonerl we called him—the son of the fisherman. Now, the lake was full of fish, and the fisherman sent up the fine lake-trout, and the jack and pike, to the city here, and made his fortune. He was a rich man, and a proud one, and all the village was afraid of him. Well, Tonerl and I were always together; sometimes we would take a rod and a fly, and stroll up early in the morning along a mountain brook, and pass the day throwing for trout. Ay, it was good sport, and pleasant work, to get a throw in a deep pool, with a noisy waterfall dashing and foaming just over our heads, and we on a rock in the middle of the stream. We knew where the sly things hid themselves, and we would bring home a basketful, that got Tonerl a good dinner and a kind word from his father. Then, at other times we would take to the rifle, and my father would give me a bullet or two and his powder-flask, and Tonerl would get a few kreuzers, and we would have our shot at the targets on the island. Tonerl was better at the rod, d'ye see, but I could beat him at the rifle.

Well, well, we were just like two brothers, and we might have been so for ever, if he hadn't had the ill luck to have a sister, just a year younger than himself. Liezl was the prettiest girl in all the village, ay, in all the country round about. Her eyes were as blue as the heavens, and her hair as bright as the sunset, and her cheek as red as the roses that covered her father's house, and her smile—when it was me she smiled to—as sweet as summer. Then she walked as gracefully as a chamois, and she had a quiet way with her that won my heart. She wouldn't speak to all, d'ye see—she was coy and quiet; but when we came home from a day's work, she would bring us a *masse* of ale, and just sip the foam off with her own pretty lips, and give it me with a "God guard thee!" that was meant in right good-will. As children, we had always played together; but when she was fourteen, and I fifteen, she kept to her father's house, and I saw her less often. But I thought of her the more, d'ye see, and somehow I could not help it.

Well, her mother was dead, and so her father said she should mind the ferry; for, you must know, there was always some traffic between the village and the island, and the fisherman kept the ferry-boat, and each person paid a kreuzer to go over. I was always going over then, though I had nothing to do at the island. She rowed beautifully. There I see her sitting in the bows, with a large brown hat, that had just one red rose in the band, and her fair hair hanging loose beneath it, and I would tell her not to trouble, for I could row a bit too. So she would go to the stern, and I would take the oars, and pull over so slowly—oh! so slowly—just to enjoy a talk with her. And then I would be up at sunrise, and climb the Spitzen to the very top, to find her an Alpine rose to put in her hat-band by the side of the other; and when she put it in, and thanked me so sweetly, I could have given the king's palace, if it had been mine, for very joy. So we two fell to loving, and when Tonerl saw that I was quiet and sad-like in our fishing walks, and asked me why, I told him freely.

"Ay, Lipperl," said he, wringing my hand, "and right glad I am; and if Liezl marries any one, it shall be you, my boy, and then we shall be brothers indeed. But mind, my father, he's a hard man, and maybe he'll say you're too poor, and not hear of it. Just wait till you can get something to do, and then when you're a bit older, you can talk about it."

Well, nothing would satisfy me but I must cast about for something to do. It so happened in about six months I heard of something. The Bauer up at the Klause (that's four hours' walk from Schlier-See) was a rich man, and owned a deal of forest. He had four men to look after the wood and the game, and the great folk from Munich would come there just for the shooting. One of his under-men was going to leave him, and as I was a good shot, I thought I might get it. Well, it was about the middle of summer. The festival of St. Leonard was to come off, and as it was the grandest day of the year in our village, great bustle was being made about. Down comes the Bauer from the Klause, and tells the wirth at the inn that he will give a prize of two gulden to the best shot on that day, and, if he wished it, take him into his service besides. Now, the wirth had a nephew for whom he thought of this place. He lived on the Wendelstoa, and didn't belong to the village; but then the match was open to everybody, so that made no difference. Well, I heard this boy was a first-rate shot, and I thought I must practise a bit to keep my hand in. But, lackaday! my own money and my father's had run quite short, and I could not afford to shoot at the target. One day a thought struck me. I was wandering through the wood, and spied a large beech standing clear from the other trees. At about the height of the bull's-eye in a target, I cut off a round piece of bark, marked off a hundred paces) that's the regulation distance, you know), and peppered away. I didn't hit him once that day, but when I had had a week's practice, ball after ball went in at the same place every time. "Ah!" thought I to myself, "Master Ludwig yonder has but a poor chance;" and I was as happy as the king.

Well, the day came at last. All was bustle at the inn. Ludwig was there, looking very well in a new jacket, and bright red breeches, and well-worked stockings; he had a flower, too, in his coat, and looked a thorough dandy. But I was not to be done there. Though we were poor in money, my grandfather, who had been a forester of the village, too, had been very well-to-do, and an important person, and my father had inherited a large stock of household goods, guns, and dress, from him. Among the last was a suit of green velveteen. Now, there were not many in the neighborhood possessed anything but cloth clothes, and the velveteen is much more prized; then, for the buttons, they were real old reichs-thaler pieces—none of your sham that you see now-a-days; and the red waistcoat was buttoned with thirty-two pieces of twelve-kreuzers, all with the Elector Max's head on them. Now, when I was dressed in this (I was as tall then as I am now), my own father scarcely knew me again.

At nine o'clock in the morning, we all went over to high mass at St. Leonard's. Nearly everybody had a horse or two but ourselves, and the wirth had four, and Ludwig his own pony. But I was glad to be on foot, for I walked all the way by the side of Liezl.

At the door of the church were at least three hundred people, men and women, from all the country round, and full as many horses. When the mass was over, the good priest and the censer boys came to the church-door. This was the signal for everybody to pop on the back of his horse, and when all were ready, away they went, at a jolting gallop (for they were mostly cart-horses) round the church. The man that arrived first had the first blessing, and this, of course, was the luckiest.

"In the name of the blessed Mother and the holy St. Leonard," cried the priest, "I bless this horse," and sprinkled it with holy water.

When this was over, the carts came up. The first was for the music. There were three fiddles, four cithers, and a flute. Then came the cart for the virgins. Of these there were twenty, all in white, and Liezl among them, the finest of the lot. The moment this cart drove off, I left my father, and off after it, running and leaping, and keeping up with it all the way to the village.

Well, when all the folk had come back, the fun began. The inn was crammed, and all the street in front of it crowded with benches and tables, covered with tankards of beer. The targets had been placed behind the inn, and the folk soon moved in that direction. There were other games going on—quoits, ninepins, bowls, catching the ring, and throwing the spike; but the rifle is the pride of a mountaineer, and the other sport was abandoned when the first shot was fired. The old hands came first; there were at least twenty of them, all well-known men, and there were some three or four considered as the best. My father was one of these, and after a long tussle with Bauer Klein's headman, he carried off the target. The last shot was fired, and I heard them call for the younkers. There was more interest about these, d'ye see, for everybody wanted to know who was a promising lad. So, when we were called for, all the lasses of the place came up, and Liezl among the number, all in white, with a fresh rose in her green hat.

We had three shots apiece, and there were some fifteen of us. Only two out of the lot hit the bull's-eye every time. Those two were Ludwig and myself.

"Hey!" cried all around; "a match—a match."

The place was cleared, and we two came forward. I could see the folk look first at me, and then at him, and I could hear them say, "Ay, Ludwig looks well in his new jacket, but Lipperl looks better in his old one."

Well, sir, I was known in the country for a steady hand. My father had it before me, and my grandfather had it before him, or they would never have been such shots. But, you'll believe me, sir, when I saw Liezl's blue eye wander from me to Ludwig, my hand shook like a murderer's. It was only a minute though, and then we took our rifles and went to the front.

"You'll take the first shot?" said Ludwig, in just a careless way, as if he was certain of his game.

"Nay, I'm at home, and you're a stranger to the village," said I; and left him the first chance.

His ball went clean to the bull's-eye, and the bell rang. I stepped forward and took my aim. I had not dared to look round; I only thought of what I had to gain, and what to lose. I fired, and the bell rang again. A second time Ludwig hit it; a second time I did as much; but when we went forward again, I could see he was a little bent, and sure enough he missed by half-an-inch, and the bell refused to ring. Now was the moment of dread. Yet all this time I had not once looked round. Just as I moved to the front I turned my head. I caught Liezl's eyes full upon me, looking as they had never looked before, and never looked again. I felt drunk, sir, drunk; I walked carelessly to the goal. I raised my rifle. In one second I saw the bull's eye and the nip of the sight in a line; my hand shook just a little; I saw the sight verge from the line; yet I pulled, and to my amazement the bell rang. I staggered back, to find myself surrounded by all my friends, and to hear a shout all around me. The next moment the Bauer came up.

"You have won like a true Bavarian," says he, "and here's the prize I promised." With that he put the piece of money into my hand, the most that had ever been there till that day, and told me I should be his under-keeper that very week.

I poured down a draught of beer, and followed the rest into the inn. The fiddlers had struck up, and a couple or two were already dancing in the big room up-stairs. The lasses were all there, and, making a bow, I chose out Liezl. We danced again and again; whenever a dance was finished, she promised me the next; and when Ludwig came up, after drinking a lot of beer, she refused him short.

Well, there it was that I told her how I loved her; and she blushed and was silent, when I asked her if she still thought of me. Oh! I was happy then, happy as I have never been since. I am well-to-do now. This house and the furniture are mine, but I would throw it all to the dogs, just to pass that day over again. All sweets must melt, they say, and this one seemed to melt very fast. It was agreed that I should ask her father then and there. In the evening I went down, and found him sitting with the wirth. Now the wirth was very angry with me at having cut out his nephew, and besides this, he had had a good deal to drink. The fisherman was sober enough, but looking as stern and proud as ever, and keeping apart from the other folk. I was but a boy, and felt awfully afraid when I saw him, for, though I could have thrown him over my shoulder, I could not look at his proud face without trembling. In a few words I told him that the Bauer had given me a place, and that I loved his daughter.

"Love my daughter?" he said, slowly and firmly; "and who gave you leave ever to love my daughter or anything of mine?"

"No one," I answered, half frightened; "but I can't help it. I am in a good way now, and I come to ask your daughter in marriage."

"And how much do you get in this grand place?" said he.

"A hundred and fifty florins a year," I replied proudly.

"Well, then, this is my answer. If you had a hundred and fifty a month, you shouldn't have my daughter. There now; so never say a word about it again."

The wirth burst into a hoarse laugh. "Well said, coz fisherman; it's a good thing to give these young fellows a set-down. They want to tread on everybody's toes."

I took no notice, but looked once more at the fisherman; his face was as cold and as stern as ever. I turned away hopeless, and went out into the dark night. I looked up at the lighted windows, and heard the music and the laughter up-stairs, and felt as if I could have killed myself. I knew the fisherman well: what he had once said he never revoked. I was just drawing my hand across my eyes—for I was but a lad, and I felt the tears stealing up—when a couple of horsemen galloped up to the door.

"Holloa, lad!" shouted one; "take these beasts to the stable. Is there any fun up there to-night? Any pretty girls, eh?"

And with that the young Baron von Ackerstein and a friend jumped from their horses, and swaggered into the inn. The baron was well known there, for he was the owner of all the land about, and mixed a good deal with the folk, whenever he was in the country; but he was a rake of a fellow, d'ye see, and spent his money most in Munich. Well, I took his horses round, and then something or other drew me up stairs after the two. The music stopped, and the folk made way as they entered the room; and the wirth and the fisherman had followed them up, and were bowing and scraping before them. I caught sight of Liezl, and saw that her eyes were fixed full on the young baron, who was very handsome.

The next moment he was waltzing her round the room. This put an end to me. I rushed down the stairs, and walked off at a rapid pace along the road, scarcely dreaming where I was going to; all I could do was to walk fast, and I felt as if I could never be happy till there were a hundred miles between me and Schlier-See. Somehow I found I was taking the road to Munich, and after a time it struck me, if I was to go up there I might forget everything. "Ah," thought I to myself, "fortune is to be found in cities; I'll up to the Residenz-Stadt, and I'll petition the king to make me one of his own foresters. Then I can come back to Schlier-See, and the fisherman will be proud enough to give me his daughter then."

So I walked on and on. The rain came down in torrents, and seemed to refresh me, and I thought I should never be tired; but when I had thought and thought over everything, I began to feel weary; and, coming at last to a little village, I turned into the inn. There were only four men sitting in the place. The wirth of the inn was one, two others were peasants, and the last looked like a townsman. He was a tall, stout man, dressed in a long black coat and trousers. On the bench near him was a carpet-bag, that showed he did not belong to the place. They were smoking, drinking beer, and talking loudly, and I sat down quietly at the end of the table and watched them.

"And sure," said one of the peasants, "they didn't touch a hair of his head for it?"

"I'll be bound but I'd do the same thing myself any day," shouted the other, thumping the table.

"Ay, ay," joined the landlord, more calmly; "it was quite a lawful deed."

The townsman just smiled quietly to hear them talk, and then replied in a gentle voice, "Murder, my good friends, is always murder, whatever the provocation may be, and the law must have its way, or it's of no use at all."

"So the judges condemned him?"

"Ay, to be sure."

"And what was the punishment? Was he locked up or fined?" asked the wirth.

"Locked up! fined!" answered the other, "for murder? Nay, nay; he who strikes with the sword must die by the sword."

"Yoi-hoi!" shouted one of the countrymen; "they didn't cut his head off? Nay, nay, you're joking."

"Joking? not a bit of it."

"Are you certain of it?"

"Certain! how can I be otherwise? for these very hands severed his head from his body."

For a moment there was a dead silence, and all three stared at the townsman as if they did not understand his meaning; then they turned to one another.

The wirth pushed back his chair, and stood up. "Sir," he said, calmly, "do you mean to say that you are a headsman?"

"I do," replied the other quietly.

The other two started to their feet. The wirth was pale with rage.

"Never," he cried, in a loud voice—"never have I had an executioner under this roof, and I will not stand it now. Get out; get out. Blood in my house! and bloody hands! Get out, if you don't want to be pitched out."

The other two joined in the cry.

The executioner got up very quietly. "I am a headsman," he said, "and, since I am not ashamed of the office, I am not ashamed to own it. I respect the laws of the land, and I do my share in maintaining them. I am not more to blame than the judge who condemns, or the jailer who puts the fetters on the criminal, and ——"

But the others wouldn't hear him out. "Get out of the house!" they shouted, and they rushed upon him.

Now, sir, fair play's a jewel. Here were three to one, and no quarter. I could not stand it, so I jumped up and stood beside him.

"Now, then," I cried, "you'll have me to fight as well, if you handle this man. Come on."

"And who are you?" shouted the wirth.

"That don't matter," says I; "three to one isn't fair. Hear this man out, if you have anything to say against him, or else come on."

At this they stopped.

"Now," said the townsman, throwing a silver piece on the table, "there's my money for what I've drunk, and more. You don't like my company; you shall have my room. Good-night, my friends;" and so saying, he took up his bag and walked to the door.

"Take up your money!" shouted the wirth after him; "I won't have it; it has been touched by bloody hands."

But the other was already outside, and not feeling comfortable where I was, I followed him.

"Thank you, my friend," said he to me, as we went along. "You see these good people have strange notions of their own, like most others. But I'm accustomed to this kind of thing, and don't mind it. It does not matter; there's another village a little way on, where one can get a bed, and there I'll keep my own counsel."

Somehow I liked the man's quiet way. I was alone in the world myself now, and so was he, and sympathy made us take to one another. We walked on a couple of miles to the next village, and little by little I told him I was going to seek my fortune in Munich, with two florins in my pocket. He was kind and gentle to me, and we agreed to walk on together the next day.

The end of it was, that I agreed to become his assistant. He was a shoemaker as well as an executioner, but he was disliked by the neighbors, and he got very little to do. You see he was my only friend in the great city, and so, as he was very kind to me, I staid with him.

Well, he taught me how to cobble, and he also taught me how to cut heads off. I took to this merely from curiosity; but I soon found a kind of excitement, like, in whirling the sword between the blocks of wood, and I could not help thinking to myself, as I did so, that I was aiming at a man's neck. I used to practise a good deal in this way, and at last I could wield the sword every bit as well as my master.

Well, five years passed on in this way, and whenever I could get no work at shoemaking, I was always practising the other thing. But all this time there had not been one execution in Munich.

I wrote several times to my father, and he wrote me, that Liezl was gone up to Munich in the service of the young baron's mother, but he did not know what street they lived in. Well, when I heard this, I went about inquiring everywhere after the baron, but could never find him out.

At last my master fell ill and died, and I was left alone in the world. I had no friends, for all the folk shunned us, and though my master left me his business and the stock-in-trade, I found it hard work to get my bread. So, when the police came to me, and asked me if I would take the place of headsman, I accepted, after a little.

About a year after this, I was called for by the governor of the jail. He took me into his private room, and spoke as follows:—

"I understand that you have practised considerably under the late executioner. Now, tell me truly whether you feel that your skill is sufficient to behead a man?"

I confess I was terrified at this question. Executions were so rare in Munich, that I had almost forgotten that I might one day be called on to do the work which then seemed to me very dreadful. However, I replied, that if time were given me to steady my hand, I thought I could undertake it.

"Well," says he, "you will not be wanted for another month or so, but it is *certain* that you will have to do it then. There is no other executioner in the city. You have been receiving pay for the work, and you cannot refuse now. So, though it is the first time, and you naturally feel afraid, you must make up your mind, and keep your hand in. Now, a murder has taken place last night—a murder of a very dreadful description, and the prisoner has already confessed that he is the murderer. At present the matter must be kept very quiet, as the murdered person is a nobleman of great influence, and it is quite unknown to the city. You must, therefore, swear to keep this secret. I have told it you, because it will be necessary for you to see the prisoner at once in his cell, and to measure his height, and so forth, that you may be able to practise accordingly. You understand?"

"Perfectly, your honor," said I.

"Ah!" said the governor, thinking, "I should say, from your speech, that you were from the mountains."

"It's true, your honor."

"And what part do you come from?" says he.

"From Schlier-See, sir."

"Humph! Now, tell me—did you ever see the Baron Von Ackerstein in those parts?"

"Yes, your honor; every day, nearly."

"That's some years ago, eh?"

"About six years last spring, sir."

"Should you know him again if you saw him?" says he.

"That I should, sir, all the world over."

He opened a door when I had said this, and passed into another room, telling me to follow him. On the floor of the next room was some long thing covered with a white sheet. The governor drew the covering off it, and there, stiff and cold, lay the body of the young baron.

"Look at it well," said the governor, "for you will have to swear to the body in a day or two."

He was but little altered. His beard and moustache were thicker and longer, and the face much thinner, but he had been shot through the heart, and the features were undisturbed.

"And the last time I saw you," thought I, bitterly, "was side by side with Liezl."

The governor pulled me away, and led me out into the prison. We passed along the cold passages, followed by one of the turnkeys, till we came to the cell where the murderer lay.

I remember how the key grated on the lock; I remember how the heavy door creaked on the hinges; and I remember well, when we stood inside, how the figure of a tall stout man in mountain dress lay huddled in one corner, with his face hidden between his manacled hands.

"Come now," said the jailer, gruffly, "you must stand up, for here's a gentleman wants to have a look at you."

The prisoner rose heavily on his arm, and then turned towards us; and, oh! it was Tonerl, my old friend, my bosom friend.

For a moment I felt my knees shake, like, under me, and my heart seemed to stop beating. It was just a moment; for the next I forgot he was a murderer; I forgot all about it—I only saw my old friend, and I fell upon his bosom. But he drew back directly, and threw me from him.

"No, no, Lipperl," he said, as the tears started into his eyes; "I am not your old friend now; I am no longer Tonerl; I am a murderer;" and as he said this he looked fiercely into my face.

"*You* a murderer, Tonerl!" I cried. "*You!* Oh, you are mad; you are out of your senses; *you* could never have done this."

"No," he replied, calmly, "I am not mad. I was not beside myself when I did it; I knew what it was; and now I feel satisfied. My sister is revenged, and rightfully."

"Your sister—Liezl! What do you mean, Tonerl? what is it?"

"Then you have not heard? They told you I was a murderer; they did not tell you *why*. I will tell you all, if they will leave us."

Now, sir, the excitement of all this made me forward. I went to the governor, and in a low voice told him that this was my oldest friend, and begged him to let us be alone for a few minutes. He consented that it should be so, when the jailer had taken the prisoner's measure.

When they were gone, I again threw my arms round Tonerl's neck, and implored him, for our old friendship's sake, to tell me all in very truth. We then squatted down on the bed, and he began.

"Your father told me why you had left Schlier-See, Lipperl. I knew you loved my sister Liezl. You'll never bear to hear all that's come to her."

"Yes, yes," cried I; "nothing can upset me now. Go on."

"You remember, the night you left, how that—that baron—that fellow—you remember how he came into the inn? Did you see him dance with Liezl? Well, he danced once, he danced twice, he danced twenty times, with the poor girl, and her head got turned with the honor, and the admiration, and all that; and she could talk about nothing else for many a day, till it was discovered that you had run away. She never knew why you did so, poor girl, and we told her that you had had a quarrel with somebody, and gone off. But she took little notice, for her thoughts were running on that cursed ——. Well, never mind. About a week later, down he comes with his mother and sisters in a fine carriage, and wants to be rowed to the end of the lake. Liezl was quite delighted, and put on her pretty hat, and rows them over. About half-way I could see him turn her out of her seat, and take the oars himself; for, you see, I thought there was something up, and I looked after them all the way. Well, when they came to the end of the lake, they all got out, and Liezl too, and walked up into the woods, until I could see no more of them. When she came back, and the great folk were gone, she rushed up to my father—she was his favorite, you know—and exclaimed, 'Now, father, you'll be happy. Only think, the old baroness has asked me to go up to Munich as her maid-servant. Is it not delightful?' and the poor girl clapped her hands. Well, my father was quite pleased, for he always wished to send Liezl into service, and as the wages they offered were high, he consented at once to her going. But I had my own notions about it, and I thought she would be much better and happier rowing the boat to the island and back, than doing servant's work in Munich. However, my father was very hard about it, and at last she went. Well, she wrote once or twice, and told us all about the fine things in the city; how she had seen the king and queen, and the old electress, and all that, and she seemed to be happy. But soon her letters came less often, and at last they didn't come at all. She had been away now four years, and always in the baron's service, but when no letters came, and we wrote and wrote, and she never answered, then thinks I to myself, something has gone wrong somehow, and I persuaded my father to let me go up to Munich after her. Well, I came up, now about six months ago, and I went straight to the baron's house. The family was out of town, and the porter said that Liezl had left the place a twelvemonth before, and nobody knew where she was gone to. I went to the police, but they could not tell me anything about her; and the more I looked, the less I discovered. However, this failure only made me the more anxious, so I resolved not to leave Munich till I had got some trace of the lost girl. I made up my mind that she had got into some other situation after leaving the baroness, and that maybe she had changed her name for some reason or other, so that it was not on the police books. My father, you know, was never very free with his money, and I soon found I could not live in the city for the same sum as I could at Schlier-See, and when I wrote to him for more he answered, I had better go back; that the girl was sure to be all safe somewhere or other, and would turn up. I don't think my father was not as anxious as I, do you see, but the *money*—he didn't like that. Well, I wouldn't go back, so I looked about for something to do, and I soon found that a porter was wanted for a large nobleman's house. He was to be at least six feet in height, and that was all that was wanted of him. I applied, and got the situation. I had little to do but stand under the *porte-cochère* all day long in a cocked-hat and feathers, with a fine fur cloak, and a sword slung in a broad embroidered band. They called me a *jäger*, but all the hunting I ever did there was after the street curs that ventured to stray into the courtyard, and were soon driven out by my whip. I didn't much like making a show of myself, but then it was for Liezl's sake, so I staid there. Well, one day, by chance, my lady took a fancy to go and see the public madhouse, and, of course, I mounted behind. When we got there, says she to me, 'Anthon,' says she (she was too fine to call me Tonerl), 'you must come in with me, to take care of me, for some of these mad people may be dangerous.' So in I went. I remember it well; it wasn't many days ago. There was a large green, surrounded by a high wall, and some twenty or thirty of the oddest fellows I ever set eyes on were roving about, doing anything they fancied; some of them digging about the ground, as if they could do any good, others singing in a roundabout way, and others walking up and down, talking to themselves. The oddest part was, that they none of them talked to one another, nor indeed seemed to take any notice of their companions, but went about making grand speeches, and throwing up their arms, all to nobody and nothing. The moment we were inside, one little man rushed up to me, and says he, quite sensibly, 'Sir, I'm glad to see you.' 'The same to you, sir,' says I. 'Well, sir,' says he, 'you look good-natured; would you do me a service? I have been residing in this palace for fifteen years. I was the King of Prussia once, but I am now St. Paul's head-cook; and, sir, would you believe it? I have been asking these fifteen years for a dish of carrots, to serve up with his boiled beef, and these people won't get it me. Would you just have the kindness to go out and buy me a bunch?' And he put up his hands, and looked so pitiful, I felt as if I would do it for him with all my heart. So I asked the keeper, and he laughed, and said, 'Oh, it's all right, my man; we've sent out for the carrots;' and he went away quite satisfied.

"Well, we saw many others, all as strange as this one, and then the keeper asked if we would like to see the cells where the women were. So up we went, and walked along a passage, where there were several women locked up; some groaning, some chained to the floor, miserable, thin, and senseless, and some glaring through the gratings as we passed.

"My lady wanted to go into one of the cells. So the keeper said he would show us one that was always left open, for the woman who occupied it was quite harmless. She had been crossed in love, he said, and was always saying she was not mad at all, and wanted to be let out.

"The door of this cell was wide open, and we could see nobody in; but, just as we were inside, a thin, wretched-looking woman glided from behind it, and caught hold of my lady's hand.

"'Oh!' cried she, in a pitiful tone, 'he said he loved me, and I believe him still.'

"Oh, Lipperl, how that voice made my heart throb! it was just the same as Liezl's. The cell was rather dark, and the face of the girl was so fearfully thin, so haggard, so wretched, that I could not tell her. But still I could not help it. I took her gently by the arm, asking my lady's leave, and drew her close to the door, where it was lighter. There, Lipperl—there were the blue eyes. It was Liezl—Liezl my sister; there was the golden hair—there—there ——"

He hid his face in his hands, and cried like a child; and, sir, would you think it? not a tear came into my eyes. I thrust my head into my hands, and felt as if my life was going. We sat in this way for many a minute, till at last Tonerl began again: "I can go on now, Lipperl," said he quietly, rubbing the tears away with the back of his hand—"I can go on now. Poor Liezl, she did not know me; but I didn't think of my lady and the keeper, who looked strangely at me. I led her down the passage where there was a window; then I took her hands. 'Liezl,' said I, 'don't you know your brother? Don't you know Tonerl? Speak to me, Liezl!'

"'Liezl?' she repeated, slowly; 'Liezl? Who calls me Liezl? Is it you, father? Are they come down to row me across the lake? Ah, I hear them; there he is; that's he. Oh, joy, joy!' and she struggled to get away. 'Let me go!' she cried; 'I must go; the baroness is calling me! Ah, false man, you do not love me—no, you would not destroy a maiden's honor; false man, false man! *Do* you love me? Ah, I know you do, and I love you—oh, so fondly;' and so she threw herself into my arms, and looked up into my face tenderly, and grasped my elbows with her thin hands. Oh! I felt as if my whole heart was breaking—breaking, and I said, 'Now you know me, Liezl; I am your brother, your own brother Tonerl; don't you know me?'

"She pushed me back with a strong effort. 'Liezl? Tonerl?' said she. 'What are these names? You are not the Baron von Ackerstein: why did you say you were? You are false! Ah, false man, false man!' and so she began again.

"I looked round, sick at heart. There was my good lady in tears. 'You never told me your sister was here,' says she. 'Poor girl, it's very sad.'

"'Oh, madame!' I cried, 'I pray you pardon me; I did not know it myself. My heart is like to break, madame. Can you do nothing for my poor sister?'

"The good lady took to crying again. 'She must be left here, I'm afraid,' she said; 'she's clearly mad.'

"'No, dear madame,' said Liezl, quite gently, 'I am not mad, though they say so. I only want to leave this place. They are kind to me; but it is too cold—too cold.'

"'And this is your brother,' said the good lady; 'do not you know him?'

"'My brother?' she answered, quietly; and then she drew back, and looked up in my face steadily for a long time, with her thin hands clasped before her. 'My brother?' and then she stared again, and I could see her face change. She had been smiling before, but it now became serious; then slowly she asked, 'Why does he weep?' and still she stared, and I looked at her, but could not say a word. Gradually I saw the tears filling her eyes, and I heard the keeper whisper to my lady, 'That is a good sign; she is getting her memory back.' At last one large tear flowed over and rolled down, and then, stretching out her arms, she gave a long, loud shriek, and threw herself upon my breast."

Here again Tonerl could bear it no longer, and burst once more into tears.

"Well," he continued, "my lady was very kind, and had power with the great folk. She spoke to the director, and the director spoke to me, and the next day my poor sister was brought to my lady's house. But she was dying, she was literally wasted away. The cold and dark of the cell had begun it; and when she discovered me as her brother, her senses had come back to her; but the shock was too much. She was so weak she couldn't walk a step, and was carried into bed, and the doctor sent for.

"Well, Lipperl, I sat by her three days and three nights, and all that time she fell off little by little. The doctor had particularly warned me to ask her nothing about anything that had passed before she—she lost her mind; but one evening, when I saw that she must die, I couldn't keep myself from asking her if she remembered anything that had happened at the baron's.

"She laid her thin hand on me—I felt it was cold and trembling—and looked up into my face quite sweetly, and said, gently, 'No Tonerl; no.'

"I had no heart to press it, and a few days after I followed her body to 'God's Acre,' where she now lies.

* * * *

"Well, some days after this, I was passing by a gunsmith's shop, when the sight of the rifles in the window reminded me of old times, Lipperl, when you and I used to shoot at the mark together, and I had a mind to buy one, and practise a bit at the shooting-gallery. I had just left my lady's place, and she had paid me handsomely, for she was sorry to part with me, and I had plenty of money in my pocket; but I was not rich enough to buy a rifle in Munich. So I went in, asked the price of one or two, and at last bought a small pistol.

"I went down to the shooting-gallery on the other side of the water, and had a shot or two, without much success, for I had never handled a pistol before. Well, there was an old fellow there shooting with a rifle, and, as he looked good-natured, I asked him to let me try it. This brought us to talking, and I offered him some beer in return for his kindness, and we sat down and smoked together. Presently he asked me my name, and said he should like me to come and see him at his master's house.

"'Ah,' says he, 'I ought to know that name well, for I was once in a place where there was a country girl who had just the same name.'

"'Yet it's not a common one, I fancy,' says I; 'Where were you then?'

"'Why, at the Herr Baron von Ackerstein's' (I pricked my ears at this, Lipperl), 'and I ought to remember the girl well, for there was a row about her in the house, and, poor girl, they bullied her so, I believe she went mad; at least they said so, and sent her to the mad-house.'

"'Ay,' said I; 'why, what did they do to her?' I said this as calmly as I could, for I thought if he found out it was my sister, he would not tell me everything; but my blood was up, man.

"'Well,' he went on, 'you must know they picked her up in the country—in the mountains somewhere—and as she was a sweet, pretty girl, as fresh and smiling as a May morning—at first she was, poor thing, but she soon lost it ——. Well, I was saying, the young baron—you see, he was a fine young man, but he hadn't much religion about him, I don't think—and I soon found out, about a week after I had been in the place, that he was courting this girl, and of course he didn't mean to marry her; it wasn't likely, he a baron, and she ——'

"'No, no; but go on.'

"'Well, you see, she was flattered, and she took to him sadly, poor girl. I remember, sometimes, his temper was awful—he would swear at me like a dragoon; and if I said a word against him in the kitchen, she always took his part, and all that. Well, it went on like this for three or four months, and then we saw a change in the poor girl. She got pale and thin, and could not hold her head up and so; and she never seemed to speak a word to the young baron, nor he to her, but she was always asking for leave to go out, and often went without leave, and somehow the baron was always out at the same time.'

"'Go on,' cried I, scarcely able to contain myself.

"'Well, one day I found it all out. I was taking wood for the fire up to my lady's room, when I heard the baron and my lady at high words inside, and I waited to see what would come of it. "I tell you what," says my lady; "I won't have it. That girl must leave the house; she must be sent out of the way. Scandal will get about, and then do you think your marriage can ever come off?"—"Bah!" says he, "she's only a peasant girl." Well, I did not like to hear this; so I knocked, and took the wood in, and as I came out again, I could hear my lady say, 'Well, the girl shall go somehow or other, and I shall think about the best way of keeping her silent." The next day the poor girl kept her bed, and two or three days after that. No one but my lady and the housemaid was allowed to go to her, and the housemaid said she was wandering in her mind. And so in about a week's time she was taken off in a carriage, and somebody found out that she was gone to the madhouse.'

"Well, Lipperl, I had kept my lips tight together, and my fist was clenched till the nails ran into my flesh, and when he came to this I got up; I didn't say a word; I paid for the beer, and rushed out of the place. I felt like a madman myself. I walked along with long strides across the bridge, and the first person I saw coming was the villain who had killed my sister. I remembered that my pistol was loaded, but I prayed to God, as I went, to withhold my hand. I met him face to face, and placed my hands on his shoulders.

"'Baron,' said I, before he could speak, 'you dishonored my sister.'

"I saw him turn pale.

"'My good fellow, what do you mean? I don't know either you or your sister. You are mad; unhand me.'

"'No, baron,' said I, bursting with anger, 'I am no more mad than she was, when you sent her to the madhouse and killed her.'

"'Bah! let me go, man,' says he. 'You bother me with your humbug about mad women and prostitutes.'

"My hand was in my bosom in a moment, and before he could breathe to say another word the pistol was at his heart. I fired, and he fell dead."

* * * *

"Sir," said the headsman at this point of his narration, "I was a young man when this happened, and you can imagine better than I can tell you the effect it made upon me. But whatever I have felt since about it, I did not give myself time to think. I only felt convinced that Tonerl was as innocent of the *crime* of murder (as we are accustomed to think of it) as a baby, whose mother dies after giving it birth; and I could only picture the shame of his being punished like a common cut-throat, and tried to plan some means for his escape. But, when I spoke to him of escaping, he obstinately refused, and begged me to think no more of it."

"You are offering me the very thing I care most to be quit of—life. It can never be anything but a burden to me now. I know I am a murderer; I know there is blood on these hands that can never be washed out in this world; pray God it may in the next. It is an awful sin, and I should only be like Cain, wandering about, outcast among my fellow creatures."

But I was not so much persuaded of this, as I was that, when the judges had heard the whole story, they could never condemn him to death. In fact, I was so certain of this, that I never once remembered that I was the executioner who would have to do the deed. But when at last that did come into my head, I swore to myself that I would die before I undertook the office.

Well, sir, the baron had been a great friend of the Electress, and for this reason the trial was carried on in private, that the people might not call out against the family and the nobles in general. And, besides this, I was refused admittance to Tonerl after the second time. I could not, therefore, find out how it was going with him, until I myself was called up as a witness.

I swore to having recognized the body of the baron, and when I was asked what I knew about the prisoner, I told them all that I remembered before I had left the Schlier-See. I was then going on to tell them the story I had heard from Tonerl himself, but they stopped me, and said, that all he had said to me in the cell had been taken down at the time. I was astonished, but pleased, to hear this, for I felt sure it would go in his favor. Well, about ten days after, just when I thought I should hear that Tonerl was acquitted, the governor of the prison sent for me.

"Headsman," says he, "I told you some time ago to keep your hand in, in case of an execution. You have done so, I suppose?"

"No, sir," I replied, "I have not. This man, sir, is my oldest friend, and I could no more execute him, than I could my own father. Besides, he is sure to be let off."

"He was sentenced to death yesterday."

"Is it true?" cried I; and I wrung my hands in agony.

"Perfectly true; and as you are the only executioner in Munich, you will have to do it."

"That will I never, sir," I exclaimed. "I throw up the situation on the spot."

"It is too late, my good man. You have been receiving the king's pay, and must do your duty."

"Never to that man; never," I repeated.

The governor walked to the door, and locked it.

"I give you ten minutes to think about it," said he.

"It is of no use, sir, for my mind is made up."

Well, he sat down to his books again, without another word, and I passed the time in thinking of the misery of my poor friend.

"Well?" said he, when the time was over.

"I say, sir, that if you dragged me to the scaffold, I would not do it."

"Well, we will see about that;" and so saying, he called in the jailer, and ordered me to be locked up, and no food given me, till I had consented to do it.

I passed as bad a night as a rat in the ice. A cell green with damp, an empty stomach, and an angry keeper; and for all that, I swore I would never be the man to murder my oldest friend in cold blood (for so I took it), just for the pay and name of the king's executioner. They sent the priest to me in the morning, when I was just beginning to snatch a sleep (for I had lain awake all night, cursing my ill luck, and thinking of to-morrow's breakfast); but, though he told me that I was no more concerned in the matter than the sword I used, that it was my right arm that beheaded the man, and not me, and that it was the duty of every proper man to do the law's bidding; whatever he might think of it, his logic was no stronger proof than my own hunger and cold, and I told him plainly that I would not do it.

Well, the jailer and a couple more came at last, and I prayed him to let me have some food; but, when he asked me if I had made up my mind to the deed, and I told him "no," he said I must wait for my breakfast till I had; and taking me under the arms, pushed me along the passage out of the prison, and into a cab. Two soldiers got in after me, and fixed their bayonets. My old master's sword, which they had brought from my lodging, was shoved in after us, and away we drove outside the town, to the Theresien-Wiese.

There was a good crowd on the meadow; for, while I had been locked up, the news that an execution was to come off had got about in the town, and it was such a rarity, that all the folk went out that could hear of it; though this was just what the justices wanted to prevent, and the reason they had hurried the business so. But a scaffold had been run up in the night, and this had given the people notice.

When we got near to the scaffold, the mounted gens d'armes, who formed a circle round it, opened to let us pass and we next passed through a company of soldiers, that formed the inner ring. As we did so, amid all the noise and murmur of the crowd, I could hear a clanking sound. They were knocking the fetters from Tonerl's feet.

Cold and fasting as I was, this sound roused me to a kind of indignation. I tried to jump out of the cab, but one of the soldiers pulled me back, and reminded me that his bayonet was fixed, and he had orders to use it, if need was. So I allowed him to lead me quietly out. The governor came up to me.

"Executioner," said he, "you will do your duty?"

"Ay, sir," said I; "but I will never behead my own friend."

"The soldiers," he replied, quietly, "have orders to force you."

The priest now came up again, but seeing that I had scarcely any chance of escape, I raised my voice, and talked as loud as I could, hoping, as a last chance, that the crowd would take my part. And so they would have done, for a disturbance was already being raised, if the soldiers had not hurried me on to the foot of the scaffold. Here, in the midst of jailers and gens d'armes, stood Tonerl, my old bosom friend, so changed, I did not know him at first. His face was as white as my mother's cap, and thin, and sunk, and wretched-looking; and his long brown hair had been all cut away, and his neck bared for the blow.

Oh! when I saw him there, I felt more determined than ever. My blood boiled up, sir, and I called out, "Tonerl, don't believe it of me. They are forcing me to it, but they shall shoot me first."

Well, sir, they had told him all about it, and I heard him say, "Let me go and persuade him."

He came up between two gendarmes, while the soldiers laid their hands on my shoulders.

"Lipperl," he cried, before I could speak, "they have told me all about it, and though I never thought it would be like this, I am glad of it. Look ye, Lipperl, I had rather you did it than any one else. I know your hand was always steady at the rifle, and you won't let it shake, to do a last service for an old friend."

"Tonerl," said I, sadly, "they may shoot us both, for I won't, I cannot do it."

Sir, as I sit here, there was scarcely a dry eye round us, when Tonerl said to me, "Lipperl, you've been a brother to me all my life. You know all about it, Lipperl, and you know, too, that I've no wish to live, even if it were possible to do so. It must be done, boy. If you don't do it, some one else must, and I had rather your hand sent me out of the world, as it has many a time helped to keep me in it, than another's."

Well, sir, I heard a great noise in the crowd; I saw them lead him up the ladder; I felt the sword thrust into my hands, and the soldiers dragged me up after him. The next moment Tonerl was kneeling before the priest, and receiving the absolution and the sacrament. My head was swimming, and the great crowd of upturned faces below seemed to whirl round and round, and the noise came like a storm-wind in the mountains.

Then all of a sudden there was a dead silence, and Tonerl threw his arms round my neck:—"You will tell all to my father—all to our friends—to the dear old village! Don't let my name be cursed there, Lipperl. Tell them the honour of their village maidens is worth my blood. And now, Lipperl, I am ready; let the blow be a firm one. Oh, God! have mercy on my soul."

For a moment I staggered, unable to lift the sword. He turned his back to me, I raised it, I struck. I saw him quiver. I saw blood spurt up; I felt it on my face.

"Strike again!" I heard him cry.

I struck again, and again I saw the blood spurt. Again I saw him quiver, and my head whirled round. Oh, it was fearful pain to me, and I felt that the crowd was shuddering in horror, and I heard a low faint murmur in that awful silence.

"Lipperl," I heard him say, "you see three heads. Strike at the middle one."

I looked up, and I saw three heads. Once more I struck, and the middle head rolled from the body. I fell back upon the scaffold, and the other two heads remained before my closed eyes. There—there—I see them now!

THE UNOWNED PICTURE.

The great painter, Rubens, during his stay at Madrid, in the year 1628, made many excursions into the neighboring parts, and the following tale is related of him during one of these excursions.

There was, in the environs of the city, a convent inhabited by one of the most austere and rigid orders of monks: into this Rubens entered and observed, much to his surprise, in the choir of the chapel which was otherwise humbly and meanly adorned, a picture which evinced superior talent.

The subject of this picture was the Death of a Monk. Every shade, every touch, spoke of the high soul and sublime genius of the painter; and Rubens, delighted, called his pupils, some of whom usually accompanied him on his expeditions, and showed him the picture. All joined with him in the loudest expressions of admiration.

"But who can be the author of this *chef d'œuvre?*" exclaimed Van Dyke, Ruben's favorite pupil.

"A name has evidently been written beneath the painting, but some one has carefully effaced it," replied Van Thulden.

Rubens craved an interview with the prior of the convent, and at the old monk's approach, eagerly inquired the name of the artist whose work so excited his admiration.

"The painter is no longer in the world," replied the monk.

"Dead!" exclaimed Rubens, "he is dead. And did he die unknown; was there no one after he was gone to give to the world a name which should have been immortal—a name before which even *mine* might bow! And, notwithstanding," added the great artist, with a noble pride, "notwithstanding, my father, *I* am Paul Rubens!"

At this name the pale face of the prior lighted up with an unwonted brightness. His eyes sparkled, and the fixed and eager look which he turned on Rubens, spoke of somewhat more than curiosity; but this excitement only lasted for an instant. The monk's eyes were again cast on the ground, and his hands, which he had raised to heaven in the moment of enthusiasm, he once more crossed upon his breast, and repeated—

"The painter is no longer in the world."

"But his name, my father, his name, that I may tell it to his country, and that he may receive, though late, the glory which is justly due to him."

And Rubens, Van Dyke, Jacques Jordaens, and Van Thulden, his pupils, one might almost say his *rivals*, surrounded the prior, and earnestly entreated him to name the unknown artist. The monk trembled. A cold perspiration trickled from his forehead down his wrinkled cheek, and his lips contracted almost convulsively, as though eager to reveal a mystery, of the secret of which he alone was master.

"His name! his name!" repeated Rubens. The monk made a solemn gesture with his hand.

"Listen!" said he, "you have misunderstood me. I told you that the author of this picture was no longer in the world; but I did not mean to say that he was actually dead."

"He is living!" exclaimed simultaneously Rubens and his pupils. "Oh, tell us then his name, that we may become acquainted with so sublime a genius!"

"He has long since renounced the world," replied the prior, calmly; "he has entered the cloister, he is a monk."

"A monk, my father, a monk!" cried Rubens. "Oh! tell me in what convent; for he must leave it. When God marks a man with the seal of genius, that man has no right to bury himself in solitude. God has intrusted to him a sublime mission; it is his duty to accomplish it. Tell me, then, the name of the cloister where he is hidden. I will bring him forth, and show him the glory that awaits him. If he refuse me, I will obtain an order from our Holy Father, the Pope, for him to return to the world, and resume his pencil. The Pope loves me, my father; the Pope would grant my request."

"I can neither tell you his name, nor that of the convent to which he has retired," replied the monk in a resolute tone.

"The Pope will command you to do so," cried Rubens, exasperated.

"Listen to me," said the prior, "for heaven's sake, listen! Do you believe that this man, before giving up the world, before bidding adieu to fortune and glory, had not hard struggles against such a resolution? Do you not feel that he must experience bitter deceptions, and cruel disappointments, before he was brought to acknowledge that all here is but vanity?" said he, striking his breast. "Leave him then to die peacefully in that asylum which he has at length found from the world and its deceptions. On the other hand, your efforts, I am convinced, would be of no avail; it is a temptation, I feel assured he would resist," added he, crossing himself, "for God will not withdraw his help. God, who in his mercy deigned to call him, will not now chase him from his presence."

"But, my father, it is immortality which he renounces!"

"My son, immortality is *nothing* in presence of *eternity!*" and the prior, pulling his hood over his face and slightly bowing, quitted the chapel, thus leaving Rubens no time to press his solicitations further.

The celebrated Fleming retired from the convent with his brilliant cortege of pupils, and all retired to Madrid silently musing on what had transpired.

The prior sought his cell, and throwing himself upon his kness on the straw mat which was his only couch, he prayed long and fervently; then, gathering together his pencils, his colors, and an easel which was lying on the floor of his dormitory, he threw them all into the river which flowed beneath the window. He gazed for some time with a melancholy smile upon the water which bore them away from his sight. When they had entirely disappeared he returned once more to kneel on his straw mat, before his wooden crucifix, to pray.

SONG.

BY W. W. FOSDICK.

'Tis said that coldness breaks the heart,
That love neglected dies,
But nothing makes the light depart
My soul caught from thine eyes.
Thy reckless hand hath thrown my gift
Of boundless love aside,
But oh! believe the vine thus rift
Hath only bled, not died.

Some brighter spot hath won thy gaze,
Some lot less low than mine,
But there's no shrine that earth can raise,
Where I can kneel, save thine.
Though others deem the idol mute,
And see no eyes that move,
Like Memnon's voice I hear a lute,
And marble stirs with love.

The Persian worshipped at the flame
When dawned the rosy light,
And only to its well-spring came,
When day was blazing bright.
But children of the fair Peru,
Like me, now Love's withdrawn,
Knelt as the sun declined from view,
And wept when he was gone.

THINGS WE TALK ABOUT.

— A pile of papers and books lie before us into which we are to delve. It is an August morning, and the air comes pleasantly through our window, although it wafts the hum and murmur of the great city. Our readers, many of them, are scattered doubtless far abroad on lake-shore and sea-shore, by mountain side and forest side; but we, imprisoned here, with Duty for our gaoler, can only sit and muse upon the green shade, the music flow of waters, the sweet breath of woodland, while below us the hot pavement blisters in the sun, and the dust bows down the little greenery that shows through our window blinds. We rise up though from vain murmurs, wipe out from the fancy the rural pictures that come crowding there, and turn to this same pile of papers and books—this inky, blackened, disordered mass wherein the world's doings lie photographed. We take up the topmost sheet.

Put it back! It is dark with misfortune and terror. Tears have welled up from a full heart and stained the sheet. Oh, Calamity stalks abroad, gaunt and terrible, convulsing the earth. Look and see where his heavy hand has lain. Look around and look abroad. Those infant forms, mangled, crushed, burned, charred—human cinders—that lie there up-piled, once so full of rich young blood, so glowing with ardent fresh life—alas! what a picture for humanity to look upon! How the heart swells up full of pity! how we instinctively shroud our own little ones in our arms! how prayers for mercy, and prayers of thanksgiving for mercy so long vouchsafed, tremble on the lips, and come up in tears to the eyes! And look farther—out upon the Lake, where dying shrieks mingle with the roar of the flame—or farther still, far away to down-stricken Lyons, where another Deluge has risen up and engulphed its tens of thousands! The heart shrinks within itself at these scenes. It has not the power to sympathize all it should. It grows numb with such accumulated horrors. Let us turn from them. Yet

—One word more. We have before us the comments of a respectable contemporary upon the inundations in France, who speaks of the practice so common in many European towns of building along the flat meadows which border the streams, as *a tempting of Providence*. This is a phrase we frequently hear. We respectfully submit, what does it mean? Is Providence an Ogre? Is He a being delighting in cruelty, who lies in wait for opportunities to rush out and crush down the helpless and feeble, because they are helpless and feeble? Is calamity and suffering so much his pleasure, that the insecurity of his creatures proves a temptation for their destruction—just as mischievous boys are tempted to play tricks upon unwary companions? This would seem to be what the expression means. The fact is, it is only one of many current phrases which speak too familiarly of Providence, and to us sounds like blasphemy. Finite man is ever attempting to measure the motives of the Infinite, and presumptuously assuming to be His interpreter. Even in this connection we observe that a Roman Archbishop has told the people of Lyons that this calamity is a visitation in consequence of their habit of working on Sundays—which the sufferers must find difficult to reconcile with the perfect immunity from the affliction which their neighbors of the opposite side of the Rhone have experienced, though no less guilty than themselves in the particular indicated.

— The next paragraph marked for our notice we pass over quickly. It is an account of certain young women in a town in Massachusetts proceeding in a mob (harsh word, ladies, but we cannot soften it) to make war upon the ale taverns in the place. May you, young ladies, strong minded as you are, live to blush for your conduct, as we blush for it now!

— Here is an illustration of the difference between fact and fancy—between truth and the newspapers. A morning paper announces that Lamartine's appeal to our countrymen has been responded to with great unanimity, and that the subscription books to his "Familiar Course of Literature" are rapidly filling up. Why, it was only yesterday that dropping into a book-store where literary people most do congregate, we opened a volume whose exterior set forth its mission as a subscription medium between the good public and M. Lamartine, and (to the confusion of the aforesaid newspaper) *two* names only were inscribed within it. Two entire and undivided subscriptions!

Let us be frank, and say that we are more inclined to read the inventive fancy of the newspaper in question, a homily on truth, than to utter any peculiar condemnation upon our countrymen for their laxity in responding to Lamartine's singular appeal. We cannot quite sympathize with this appeal. There is not an American author through the breadth of our land, however eminent, whose income is not utterly insignificant compared to the princely revenue of Lamartine. This is not the first time that he has appeared in the capacity of a public beggar. His tastes, his habits, and his luxuries have been Oriental in their character, and his wants exceed the utmost power of wealth to supply. We cannot help but sorrow over a position so unworthy his greatness, for mendicity is always repugnant, let the names with which it is invested be ever so exalted.

At the same time let us say, that "The Familiar Course of General Literature" will prove, undoubtedly, a work of remarkable interest, and considered upon its own grounds alone, entitled to a wide circulation and liberal support.

—Politics! The newspapers are crowded with politics. Politics wherever you go. Politics at the corners of the streets, on the brick walls, in a thousand flaunting banners, in the theatres, at the breakfast-table, at dinner! Politics unceasingly. Think of it. For three months more—at an accumulative ratio, no doubt, at that. Accumulative ratio? Politics more talked about, fought about; more banners, more meetings, more confusion—more hubbub—more of all these things than we have now? The thing is not within the scope of human capacity. If there were not some enjoyment to be extracted from it, it would be already past endurance. It is amusing sometimes to see the triangular sharp-shooting which an encounter from the respective partisans will bring forth. The other day we were present at a good example of *cross*-firing. Fremont's Catholicity (supposed or otherwise) came up. A friend very gravely began to assure a decided Fillmore man that his apprehensions were indeed true, for he himself saw Fremont *cross*—the street. Another immediately declared that Fremont was undoubtedly a Catholic, as he upon one occasion saw him wear a *cross*—look. A third of the party proposed that the anti-Catholic feeling should procure the passage of a law forbidding *cross*-roads; a fourth knew of a Know-Nothing friend who had been expelled from the order because he was *cross*-eyed; still another was aware of an anti-Catholic so violent in his prejudices as always to refuse to avail himself of the advantages of a *cross*—cut, and who would never upon any occasion sit *cross*—legged; and, in conclusion, it was agreed all around to cut all ill-natured acquaintances who came under the application of *cross*—patches.

—POOR Poe (we wonder if this epithet clings to Poe merely because of the alliteration) has fallen into French hands. His works have recently been published in Paris, where they have created no little sensation. Criticisms and eulogies abound. Among them is the following extraordinary "notice" from the pen of M. D'Aurevilly:

> "There is indeed something Medusean in Edgar Poe—genius and destiny! His life and his talent frighten us. Everything is, in this great outlaw, sinister, black, terrible, of a profound and tragically voluntary disorder. Edgar Poe was an unfortunate of the most startling proportions. Aristocratic, like Lord Byron, he was born chained to the yoke of a democracy. America, which covers with dollars the meanest mountebank, was for him the tower of starvation, and made him swallow every evening the key which Gilbert swallowed but once—in the agonies of death. The same eternal history, but with a still more beautiful variation in its inexhaustible cruelty! Poe lived all his life, which was happily short, in disdain, in misery, and ceaseless labor, for he worked like a slave; but the sweat in which we are to eat our bread flowed fruitless over his stoical forehead. Unhappy vagabond he! He became a drunkard by misery of the heart, like Sheridan—poor Brinsley—who drank for hours, silently, in tears! Formed from a harder marble, Edgar Poe drank his chalice of fire with a colder frenzy. But the alcohol did none the less asphyxiate his powerful youth. In full physical and mental beauty, he died of *delirium tremens* in the street—no, not in the street, but in the gutter—stretched out helpless, far from God and damned, he believed, for he believed that! The fixed idea of Poe, the idea which usurped his mind, which crushed him, but which in striking, found him impassible, was the idea of his damnation, without remission and without mercy. A thing as horrible as true, he accepted his position of reprobate and nursed it."

—How, among other changes and shiftings in this kaleidoscopic world, is the art of novel writing changed? What a different railroad institution it now is, compared to the old fashioned stage-coach system—so stately, decorous, grand—so methodical in its approaches, so polished in diction, so elaborate in style, so moving with calm, unruffled progress, as moved our grandmothers in hoops, furbelows and powder! Nobody thought in that blessed period of becoming interested in a novel before the second volume. It was an understood thing, that a certain quantity of dullness—a purgatory of preliminaries—was necessary before the reader could hope to experience the full interest of the story. No inducement in the world would tempt the novelist to hurry his pace. His characters had all to be introduced with a great flourish and pomp—just as we see melo-dramatic heroes ushered upon the stage in our cheap theatres by a blast of the trumpet. But all this is not the modern way. Now we bolt at the pith at once. The public are too impatient for preliminaries. They must be startled at the beginning. Indeed, it is all now very like taking a cold bath. We turn over the title-page and jump in!

But to confess the truth. we like the old-fashioned way better than the new. We do not like to bolt into a parlor and astound the company. We prefer to familiarize ourself to the assembly by degrees, and let our spirits rise as our acquaintance deepens. A novel, it seems to us, should be very like Bridget's broth: You clap it on the fire cold, and let it gradually warm, hotter and hotter, until the boiling point is reached, then whisk it off—your novel is cooked.

Not that we are disposed to accept of the old way in every particular. Melinda over her embroidery discussing with such transcendent sweetness all the cardinal virtues, in a style of smooth redundance and wonderfully accurate syntax; or Lord Montaine making love to Clarissa in sentences forty words long, and receiving the lady's blushing Yes, with a prefatory homily on virtue of twenty minutes' duration—these, no doubt, delighted our fine old grandmothers, but are now scarcely acceptable to the most decided admirer of old time modes of doing things. What *we* uphold is simply the old style of accumulative gradation of interest—beginning at a given point, and progressing with continually accelerating force to the climax.

But slow, prosy, stilted and pompous as were the novels of the time we speak of—with their characters always in grand toilette, with their unendurably perfect grammar, their overwhelming propriety, and their didactic tediousness, there are but few novelists of the present time who can so secure the ears and hearts of the public, as those prolific disciples of the Minerva press succeeded in doing. Novel reading will probably never again so infect all classes, so crowd out all other subjects of thought or discussion. Are we not told that in some cases a whole village would assemble on the green for successive afternoons to hear Richardson's novels read aloud? Imagine a new novel, say even one of Dickens's, or of Bulwer's, creating a *furore* like that. And yet how much more is exacted of the novelist of to-day? How much wider a range of philosophy and nature does he embrace? How much deeper does he delve into the mysteries of life, and with what greater subtlety does he dissect and analyze human motives and human passions? The novel of old was an essay on virtue—rich, stiff, and showy, like old brocade, a matter of powder, pumps and rose-water—the novel of the present is the Scalpel, laying open the Heart of the World.

—"A BOOK TO READ," was the positive assertion upon a placard which caught our eye the other day. The book was "Rachel and the New World." Our judgment immediately revoked this too positive declaration, and pronounced it "A Book to Burn."

—THE reader will experience pleasure in reading the following letter descriptive of the romantic and beautiful scenery of Berkshire, from the graphic pen of a well-known literary lady:

> "*July 28th.*
>
> "The county of Berkshire, lying on the western border of Massachusetts, abounds in beautiful and storied scenery, celebrated by many distinguished pens. Our transit thither was made by the Harlem Railroad to Chatham, and thence twenty-seven miles by the Western. The hospitable home where we found a cordial welcome, is about a mile and a half from Pittsfield; a massive, antique-looking house, surrounded by lawns shaded with majestic trees, and bordered with luxuriant shrubbery, and commanding views on all sides of a glorious sweep of varied landscape, with distant mountain ranges. In the rear of the mansion, deep down in the hill shadows, is a tiny lakelet, called 'The Tear of Heaven,' covering some twenty acres, crystal clear, and bordered by a path over-arched with foliage; and in front are the peaks and terraces of South Mountain, Oceola and Richmond Hill, while Greylock, the loftiest mountain in the Old Bay State, several thousand feet above the sea level, towering proudly over all others.
>
> "There are many localities in this neighborhood worth a special journey to see. Washington Mountain, a part of the

Hoosac Range, which forms a continuation of the Green Mountains for the entire length of the county, is within an hour's drive; and a deep, rocky gorge in its side, where a stream flings itself over a black ledge of boulders, has received the name of 'Undine's Gorge.' Pontoonic Lake is a crystal mirror framed between pine covered towering hills; its western swelling shore terminating in the Taghconic summits, the shadows of which appear in the clear sheet. A noble grove of pines shading a smooth sward on the banks of this sparkling lake, was the resort of a pic-nic tea-party the afternoon of our arrival. They had dined upon the mountain side, and here prepared their evening beverage of the sparkling water boiled over a hollow stump that served as a fireplace.

"Lebanon Springs is but seven miles from Pittsfield, just across the State boundary line, which makes it the resort of runaway lovers who want Hymen's knot tied in a hurry. The Shaker settlement is at this place. One of the wildest scenes, four miles off, is a deep, dark gorge called 'The Gulf,' and once known as 'The Wizard's Glen.' A steep hill seems to have been rent asunder to its base, huge fragments of flint rock jutting from its riven sides, scattered all around, and piled in chaotic confusion. These splintered crags, hoar and desolate of vegetation, enclose cavernous recesses and wild hollows, through which the murmur of hidden streams is heard—a cool retreat from the heat of a summer's day. Lake Onota, famous for its white deer, lies in an elevated valley two miles west of the town, bordered by green and mossy woods, and presenting a picture that has oft enchanted the wandering artist. Wahconah's Falls, in one of the most lonely and neglected spots in the county, is some ten miles distant; a sheltered, romantic cascade, where a branch of the Housatonic makes a descent of about eighty feet between dark perpendicular cliffs.

"In the centre of a magnificent panorama of hills stands the picturesque town of Pittsfield, numbering seven thousand inhabitants, and issuing three weekly papers. The grove of elms shading the green in its midst, surrounds the Old Elm—celebrated in its history—which has weathered the storms of centuries, and stands a grey and solemn monument of the past.

"Several distinguished persons live here. The residence of Governor Briggs is just out of the village, and within its limits, that of Rev. Dr. Todd, the author of the 'Student's Manual.' Here, also, is the country seat that belonged to Hon. Nathan Appleton, in which still 'repeats its hours' the 'old clock on the stairs,' sung by the poet Longfellow. When the proprietor sold the house and departed, he could not find it in his heart to remove the 'ancient timepiece' which gave its lesson 'from its station in the hall.'

"The old homestead of Oliver Wendell Holmes, on a hill overlooking the Housatonic, stands two miles southward. Adjoining this estate is 'Arrowhead,' the residence of Herman Melville, author of 'Typee' and 'The Piazza Tales'—a nook of beauty at the base of a wooded hill, with grounds picturesquely shaded and sloping into the valley.

"Lenox, on an elevated site, is six miles from Pittsfield, surrounded by mountain ridges, and commanding views of varied beauty in its undulating hills, sunny slopes, and broad lovely valley. Lakes and mountain-streams sparkle in the distance, and the richest cultivation blended with nature's wild luxuriance, greets the nearer view. There is a gem of a lake called the Stockbridge Bowl, and many other objects of interest will be pointed out. The place is 'a jungle for literary lions;' several distinguished authors reside there, and many come to pass the summer. A deep quiet broods all day over the village; but in the cool of evening hordes of ladies promenade the streets in tasteful costumes, alone or escorted by gentlemen, and every piazza has its tableau of lively visitors.

"Miss Sedgwick—the well-known authoress—is spending this summer with her brother, Mr. Charles Sedgwick, who is an invalid. Hawthorne's home not very long since, was on the banks of the lake just mentioned; but he is gone to seclude himself elsewhere.

"A little out of the village you may enter on grounds picturesquely bordered by a magnificent piece of woods, along which the road leads to a cottage fronted by a green lawn, and on one side commanding a beautiful nook between the mountains where lies cradled a gem of a lakelet, almost hidden by the foliage of trees in the flush of summer. This is the home of Mrs. Kemble. The cottage parlor is simply, but tastefully furnished; and the open piano showed that music as well as literature, helped to charm the hours. As we drove back through the grounds, the lady emerged from the wood, wearing the wide-brimmed straw hat that is so popular in this region for a shelter from the sun, and after salutations had been exchanged, walked on to open the gates for us.

"The beautiful village of Stockbridge, the winding Housatonic, and Monument Mountain,

'Shaggy and wild,
With mossy trees, and pinnacles of flint,'

whose bare old cliffs, dark with the moss of centuries, have called forth the inspiration of Bryant; the "Ice Glen"—a narrow, gloomy gorge, half filled with fallen trees and mossy boulders—where, of a dark night, the ladies and gentlemen of the place form 'a torchlight procession' in fancy costume to the sound of weird music—and many other scenes of interest, belong to this region. All are charmingly described, with the traditions appertaining, in a book called 'Taghconic,' which every tourist should possess. A visit to Greylock's cloud-touched summit would appropriately crown other excursions. A friend thus describes the view: 'Far in the distance we see the hills around our own home, here appearing as gentle undulations. Further off and more dimly seen, rises the range of the Kaatskills, with the noble Hudson at their base. Fill up the picture with a fertile country, dotted with villages and mountain lakes, and beautifully interspersed with woodland, and you have, if your imagination is sufficiently vivid, the scene that lay before us.'"

—As we write, the thermometer marks its inexorable ninety-eight. The atmosphere looks hazy and scorched, and hangs like a brassy pall about the horizon. The trees pantingly strain to lift their dust-bowed limbs, and fail. Everything oozes heat. The brick walls fling back the sun-rays in gushes of hot air. Things animate and inanimate, steam, and scorch, and glitter with a fiery, revengeful glow. Vehicles that roll by stir up clouds of pulverized dust that fall about us like cinders. Flies hum in and out of the open window, and irritatingly alight upon our perspiring flesh. Unfortunately, we do not possess Uncle Toby's sublime philanthropy. The world is *not* big enough for them and us—if big enough, why do they persist in tantalizing the end of our nose? It grows hotter. What, only ninety-eight? Nothing more than ninety-eight? It is difficult to believe it. If we were a thermometer, our condition would certainly indicate the boiling point. We are positively simmering, and big drops of sweat bubble up on our brow. And yet it is no wonder that the thermometer is only ninety-eight. It has nothing in the world to do but be quiet and keep cool. Had it editorials to write; was it in pursuit of elusive ideas that, follow up as we will, still escape; was it whipping up a jaded brain, and, torture-like, extracting thoughts from an already exhausted receiver—was it doing these things, would it merely indicate a paltry ninety-eight? Not a bit of it. The thermometer, then, is not for us. It may be a faithful reflector of its own feelings, but it fails miserably when it attempts those of ours. If it marked twice ninety-eight, it would approach nearer the red-hot condition of our blood.

Oh, for the sea-shore, for the mountain top—for air somewhere, or somehow—for a dip in the salt brine, a dive beneath the surf, a plunge into the Atlantic! *Is* there a North Pole? or an Arctic region? Can such things be, and we believe in them? We try to dream of them, to fancy ourself on the "frosty Caucasus," but it will not avail. Our fancy only conjures up the vast snow piles in the "melting mood," and dripping away in huge globules of sweat. Now, assuredly, is the time to discover the Northern Passage. How! Do you tell us that on this fearful August day those Arctic waters are still held in icy chains? Not "melt, thaw, and resolve into a dew," with a sun like this baking the earth's crust, and doing it malignantly brown? not to-day, when all the Imps are stirring up the huge furnace to our literal dissolution, and every fissure of the earth appears to be a sort of Vesuvius? Preposterous! The North Pole is a myth—an impossibility—a mid-winter dream!

Dickens, in his last installment of Little Dorrit, introduces to us a Noble Refrigerator. Good! Cannot some of the species be imported? What a blessing they would prove to tropical climates! The geographers, we believe, do not set down our climate as tropical, but what is their authority worth? If this be not tropical weather, what is it like? Hotter than this? Then must the human race be born for roasting (mundane roasting, we mean). But let us have the Noble Refrigerator. Ah, Dickens! of all thy creations we thank thee most for this.

—A RECENT event at St. James's might almost have prophetically glimmered upon the mind of Shakspeare:

Touchstone.—Wast ever in court, shepherd?
Corin.—No, truly.
Touch.—Then thou art damned.
Corin.—Nay, I hope——
Touch.—Truly, thou art damned, like an ill-roasted egg, all on one side.
Corin.—For not being at court? Your reason?
Touch.—Why, if thou never wast at court, thou never saw'st good manners; if thou never saw'st good manners, then thy manners must be wicked; and wickedness is sin, and sin is damnation. Thou art in a parlous state, shepherd.

The English press is the new Touchstone, and the luckless gentleman of the yellow waistcoat is the new Corin. The reader knows all about it. He has had his laugh over it. A slight error, a misunderstanding about court rules, a little *contretemps* which never should have got beyond the antechamber where it occurred, came near precipitating the whole English nation upon our shores, and brought about our ears a broadside of invective fairly staggering and overwhelming. Was there ever so amusing a farce enacted by grave men? Was ever Oxenstiern's axiom (everybody knows it, better illustrated? Unfortunate and luckless Mahan! Truly, according to Touchstone, is he hopelessly and irrecoverably ———. He was guilty of consummate wickedness in being ignorant of court manners. And in offending court manners, he struck a blow at the power of the greatest autocrat in the world, an absolute and inexorable monarch, to whom even kings bow down—*Fashion!* It would have been better for him to have single-handed defied the material power of all the nations of Europe—to have been guilty of any crime involving merely considerations of right, or such trifles as justice and virtue—to have steeped his soul in any depth of iniquity, than thus boldly have defied that mysterious, infallible, inscrutable power which we call *Fashion*—emanating no man knows where, going forth no man knows how, but ruthlessly, inexorably, rigidly binding down the whole human race to its mandates and laws. Revolutions? Where is the Cromwell or the Washington who will dare hurl himself upon this impregnable tyranny? Where, indeed? The fact is, Touchstone is purely right. Court Fashion is your only virtue. If you would be gracious in the sight of man, down, and huddle with the crowd at the mighty monarch's feet.

But it seems that the American professor is not the only offender against court etiquette. Another, and this time a very conspicuous personage, has alarmed and horrified the world. The Empress Eugenie is the guilty one. She has endangered the stability of her husband's throne beyond repair. We may look now for another French Revolution any day. She had the *gaucherie* upon a court occasion to stoop and pick up a diamond which had fallen from her diadem. This offence followed one a few days earlier, when she picked up a handkerchief she had dropped. After stooping to pick up Napoleon, she might have been excused these lighter offences, but two such slips of court breeding following close upon each other, is more than Frenchmen can submit to. Murmurings are already heard. A storm threatens. The Jacobins are looking up. The Orleanists begin to hope. The foundations of the present rule are shaken. Louis Napoleon must fortify himself, or else we shall have the scenes of the first Revolution re-enacted —and Eugenie possibly expiating her faults as Marie Antoinette expiated hers.

—THE female sovereigns of Europe are getting into a state of public agitation. The Queen of Greece, altogether the handsomest lady upon any throne of Europe, except Eugenie, perhaps, is in a state of anxiety from a desire that Otho is said to feel for a resignation of his throne to the heir agreed upon between himself and the Bavarian princes. The title of Queen is something, but for that, all the dignity that Greece can give to the possessor is hardly worth keeping.

Isabella of Spain is busy quelling insurrections with her presence and her tears. By the way, how little is really known of this woman. She is one of the most impulsive, brusque and natural persons in the world; not handsome, certainly, but with a neck and bust perfectly magnificent. The young Empress of Austria has blessed her Imperial husband with a second daughter, and he in return is blessing Hungary with an amnesty, by which many of the exiled patriots will be given back to their homes. This is pleasant news. We have already alluded to the commotion Eugenie has excited in Paris, and of the ado in England because an American presented himself at the Queen's *levee* without a sword. Victoria proved herself in this affair like the sensible lady she always is, and would have received the Professor pleasantly enough, but for her servants. A Princess of Prussia is to be married in due time, and, notwithstanding the tumult in her kingdom, Victoria thinks of going to the wedding.

—SOME Americans at Paris, it seems, have been making themselves conspicuous for dissipation at the French capital, and are said to consider it as a rather good joke, that they have appeared intoxicated in the presence of the Emperor. It is a joke which disgraces every American, at home or abroad.

—IT is heralded as a remarkable instance of benevolence, that some lady who boarded at a hotel near the place of the railroad accident, near Philadelphia, quieted a crying infant taken from the wreck, with the nourishment which naturally belonged to her own child. Surely kindness is not so unknown to the sex, that a trivial act like this should be recorded in print. There probably is not one woman in fifty who would not have done the same thing. I have, myself, known a lady in the far West, take an infant of three weeks old from beside its mother's grave, and travel seventeen hundred miles, sharing the nourishment of her own child with the little orphan all the way, and when it was left safely with its grandparents, return again to her home, without waiting for thanks, or appearing to think the act one of extraordinary merit.

—But here is an instance of bravery and affection which makes the tears start as you read it. Upon the burning deck o the Northern Indiana, a wife and husband had but one life preserver between them. He would have put it on her, but this woman, weak and timid though she was, refused the safety he urged, and would not move till her own hands had fastened the preserver around his form. "She would cling to him," she said; "that was safety enough for her." He yielded, and together they made the desperate plunge. For half an hour this man, borne up more by the heroism of his wife than by the means of support she had surrendered, struggled in the waves. When his courage failed, she, still clinging to his side, urged him to fresh exertion, declaring constantly that when his strength failed she would drop away first and relieve him of her weight. Borne up by this angel, how could the man sink? He struggled on, minute after minute, and when just ready to despair, a steamer hove in sight and took them both on board.

Here *was* heroism. Here was a grand woman, worthy of the immortality she would be the last to expect. To die with one's husband is comparatively an easy thing, but to die first—to leave him behind and go bravely into eternity alone—this requires something more than common womanhood. It is sublime heroism, and should be recorded in letters of living fire.

LITERARY.

THE warm weather must be our excuse for the limited number of our literary notices this month. When the thermometer ranges over ninety, the best book is more apt to produce slumber than anything else.

The best novel of the season is, undoubtedly, *John Halifax, Gentleman*, by the author of "The Head of the Family." The story s very simple—the mere history of a rising man, of one who lifted himself up by power of will, from the lowest rank to the proud level and title of "Gentleman." We find it difficult in the earlier chapters of the book to *feel* the truthfulness of the boy-portraiture. The colors are too high; and the only image the picture conjures up is a sort of miniature maturity, neither child-like nor boy-like. The motives of the characters are evidently measured from the author's philosophical stand-point, rather than from their own, and it is neither natural nor pleasant to see boyhood so worldly and wisely premature. Very few authors are successful in children-drawing. But, as the book advances, these faults disappear, and we have a succession of well managed, delicately touched, and wonderfully pleasing domestic scenes. The closing chapter can scarcely be excelled in fiction for simple, touching pathos. (Harper & Brothers.)

The Wanderer; or, Life's Vicissitudes, by the author of "The Watchman," is a well written and exceedingly clever book, affording wide ranges of scene and character, with a plot skillfully conceived and managed, with a special view to novelty of situation and concentration of interest. We think it a better book than "The Watchman." The author is Mr. J. R. Maitland, of this city. (E. D. Long.)

The Martins of Cro' Martin is the last book by Charles Lever. Does anybody know how many books Lever has written? Has anybody ever read them all? We have not read the Martins. We learn upon good authority that it is equal in spirit, vivacity, and interest to the best of his earlier books—and something better than his later ones. We hope it is. (Harpers.)

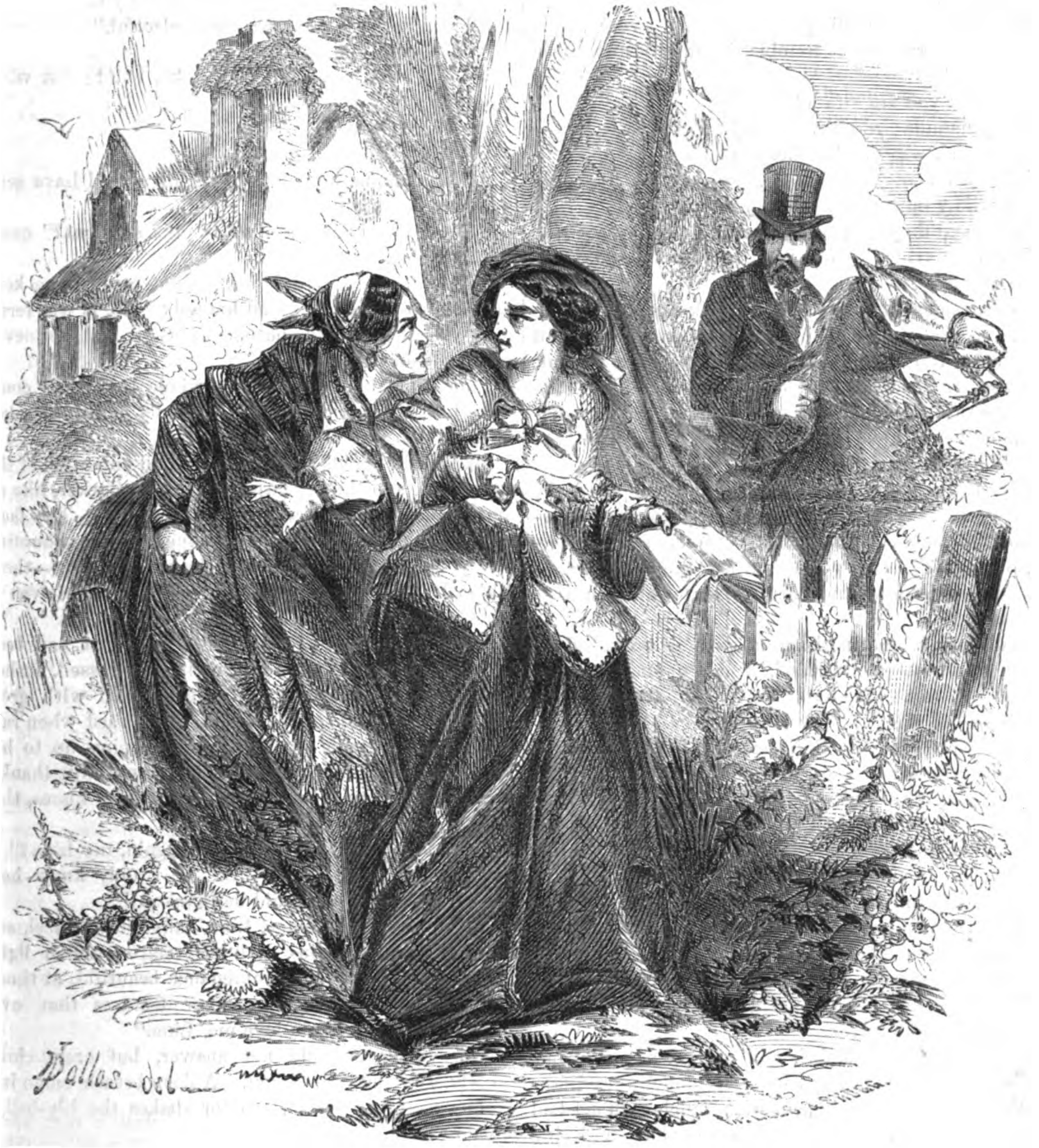
The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth, is the story of a celebrated "Mountaineer, Scout, and Pioneer," at one time the adopted chief of the Crow Indians. The book is crowded with novel and thrilling adventures, graphically and spiritedly related, and contains numerous well-executed illustrations. (Harper & Brothers.)

The Last of the Foresters; or, Humor on the Border, is a story of the Virginia Frontier, by John Esten Cooke. Mr. Cooke is the author of "The Virginia Comedians," one of the most truly original and thoroughly American books the country has yet produced—but very uneven in execution. The first volume was really fine—the second simply poor. After "The Virginia Comedians" came several other books, all falling short of the author's first book, very clearly evincing that he was writing too much and too fast. "The Last of the Foresters," however, is an improvement on "Ellie,' and some others. Mr. Cooke has nice discrimination of character, great feeling for the picturesque, and a talent peculiarly and decidedly dramatic. He has it in his power to take a lofty position in American literature; but, if he sacrifices all his high promises for the bauble of passing applause, if his vanity forces his crude, half-digested performances upon the world, and allows him to sit down contented with the one earnest effort of his youth, he will lose the crown he aspires to gain. Let him beware of frittering away his genius on things unworthy his really superior powers. (Derby & Jackson.)

—Peterson, of Philadelphia, is publishing a neat 12mo. edition of the works of Charles Dickens—a style, we think, much more desirable than the more cumbersome 8vo. Putnam has also commenced the promised 12mo. edition of Irving's Life of Washington. Biographies of the Presidential candidates are numerous enough—some of them fearfully dull reading, notwithstanding their excess of patriotism, and other political virtues which flourish rankly at election periods.

MRS. STEPHENS' NEW MONTHLY.

OCTOBER, 1856.



LOST JEWELS.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

CHAPTER VII.—THE MORNING INTERVIEW.

Mabel was looking at her adopted daughter and the door opened so noiselessly that neither of them had observed it. Thus Agnes Barker remained some minutes in the room, listening to their conversation with breathless attention.

"Mother," repeated Lina and her face flushed

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S., for the Southern District of New York.

like a wild rose, "I have something to say; don't look at me, please, it makes me afraid."

"Afraid, my child!" said Mabel, smiling, "afraid of your mother! Shame, Lina!"

"But I can only remember that you are *his* mother now, dear Mrs. Harrington!"

"Dear Mrs. Harrington! Why, child, what has come over you?"

"Something—something so strange and sweet that it makes the very heart tremble in my bosom, dear mamma, and yet——"

"And yet you are afraid!"

"Yes, mamma; you have thought so highly of him—he is so much wiser and nobler than I am—he——"

Mabel drew a quick breath, and turned her eyes almost wildly on the face of the young girl.

"Of whom do you speak, Lina?"

Lina was terrified by her look, and faltered, "Of—of Mr. Harrington, dear mamma."

The Parian cup in Mabel's hand shook like a lily in the wind. She sat it slowly down, and suppressing a thrill of pain that ran through her like the creep of a serpent, remained for a moment bereft of all speech. It was the first time that Lina had ever called Ralph, Mr. Harrington, and the mistake drove the very blood from the heart of her benefactress.

"Mr. Harrington? and what of him?" inquired the pallid woman, clasping her tremulous hands and striving to hold them still in her lap. "What of Mr. Harrington, Lina?" Her voice was low and hoarse; the very atmosphere around her, froze poor Lina into silence.

"Nothing, indeed nothing at all!" she gasped at length. "I was so terrified, I don't know what I wished to say. It took me so by surprise, and—and——"

Mabel's face lighted. She remembered her adventure the night before, and again mistook poor Lina.

"Oh, yes, my own sweet child, I forgot that they kept my peril from you all night. Mr. Harrington did, indeed, save me."

"Save you, mamma? how? from what?"

"I see they have not told you how near death I was. Oh, Lina! it was terrible when that wheel plunged me into the black depths. In a single minute, I thought of everything—of my home, of Ralph, of you, Lina."

The young girl did not answer. She stood aghast with surprise and terror.

"I thought," said Mabel, still excited and nervous, "I thought of everything I had ever done in my life—the time, the place, the objects with which each act had been surrounded, flashed before me like a living panorama."

"Mother, how did this happen?" faltered Lina, trembling from head to foot.

Mabel lifted her face, and saw how pale and troubled the young girl was.

"Sit down, darling, here at my feet, and I will tell you all. Move, Fair-Star, and let your mistress sit down."

The beautiful Italian greyhound that had been looking so wistfully at his mistress all the morning, as if he knew all the risk she had run, drew back from his place near the embroidered stool, and allowing Lina to seat herself thereon, stole back to his position, contrasting the snowy folds of her morning-dress with the pretty scarlet housings, edged with black velvet, which he always wore in chilly weather.

"Why, how you tremble! how white you are, Lina! and I was but just thinking you neglectful."

"Neglectful—oh, mother!"

"Well, well, it was all a mistake, child; but what kept you from me so long?"

"I went out to walk."

"What, after hearing of——"

"Oh! mamma, how can you think so? I have seen no one this morning."

"Then you knew nothing of this accident?" questioned Mabel, thoughtfully.

"Indeed, indeed I did not. What could have kept me from your side, if I had known? Oh, it was terrible! What must have become of us all had you never returned—of me, of *him?*"

Lina could hardly speak, the whole thing had come upon her so suddenly, but sat wistfully questioning her mother with those tender blue eyes.

Mabel told her all, even to the false illumination of the cedar tree, and the appearance of Agnes Barker, like an evil shadow in the firelight. All? no, no! The facts she related faithfully, but feelings—those haunting spirits that fluttered in her heart even yet—those Mabel Harrington could not have spoken aloud even to her God.

When Mabel had told all, Lina's face, that had been growing paler and paler as the recital progressed, flushed with sudden thanksgiving; her eyes filled with great bright drops, such as we see flash downward when rain and sunshine strive together; and, creeping up to her mother's bosom, she began to sob and murmur thanksgivings, breaking them up with soft tender kisses, that went to Mabel's heart.

"You are glad to have me back again, my Lina?"

"Glad, mamma, glad? Oh, if I only knew how to thank God, as he should be thanked!"

"I think you love me, Lina," answered Mabel, and her face was luminous with that warm, tender light, which made her whole countenance beautiful, at times, beyond any mere symmetry of features that ever existed. "I think you love me, Lina."

The young girl did not answer, but crept closer to Mrs. Harrington's bosom. A deep breath came in a tremor from her bosom, as odor shakes the lily-bell it escapes from.

Thus, for a little time, the two remained in each other's embrace, blissful and silent. All this time Agnes Barker looked on, with a dawning sneer upon her lip.

At length, Mabel lifted Lina's face from her bosom, and kissing the white forehead, bade her sit down and partake of the breakfast that stood upon a little table at her side. She filled a cup with chocolate from the small silver kettle, and pressed it upon the young girl.

"My heart is too full—I cannot taste a drop," said Lina.

"Nonsense, child," answered Mabel, and, with a laugh and a bright look, she hummed—

> "Lips, though blooming, must still be fed,
> For not even love can live on flowers."

Why did the rosy blood leap into that young face at the word "Love?" Why did those eyelids droop so bashfully, and the little hand begin to shake under the snowy cup it would gladly have put down? Lina remembered now that her secret was still untold, while Mabel, startled by her blushes, thought of the first words that had marked their interview, and grew timid as one does, who has suffered and dreads a renewal of pain.

Thus these two persons, loving each other so deeply, shrunk apart, and were afraid to speak. Poor Lina, with her exquisite intuition which was a remarkable gift, drooped bashfully forward, the roses dying on her cheek beneath the frightened glance which Mabel fixed upon them, and her eyelids drooping their dark lashes downward, as the falling leaves of a japonica cast shadows.

At last Mabel spoke low and huskily, for, like all brave persons, she only recoiled from pain for the moment. Her heart always rose to meet its distresses at once, and steadily.

"Tell me, Lina, what is it? You have not heard of my escape, and yet something disturbed you."

"Yes, mamma!"

"And, what is it?"

Lina struggled a moment, lifted her eyes full of wistful love, and, dropping her head in Mabel's lap, burst into tears.

"You love some one?" said Mabel, with an instinctive recoil; "is that it?"

"Yes, yes; oh, forgive us!" burst up from among Lina's sobs.

"Forgive us—and who is the other?" There was a tremble in Mabel's voice—a premonitory shiver of the limbs. Oh, how she dreaded the answer that would come.

"You know—you must guess," pleaded poor Lina.

"No, who is he?"

"Mrs.—Mrs. Harrington, oh, don't send me away!"

There was no danger that Mabel Harrington would send the young girl away. Her nerves were yet unstrung, her strength all gone. A look of anguish, keen but tender, swept over her face. Her hand fell slowly on the bowed head of poor Lina. She struggled to sit upright and speak words of encouragement, but the brave, true heart sunk back, repulsed in its goodness by the enfeebled lady, and she fell back in her chair, white and still, like some proud flower torn up by the roots.

She was so still, that Lina ventured to look up. The deathly white of that face terrified her, and with a cry she sprang to her feet, looking wildly around for help.

"She has only fainted," said Agnes Barker, closing the door which she still held slightly ajar, as if that moment entering.

"There is aromatic vinegar on the console yonder—do bring it, while I open the window."

Lina ran for the crystal flask pointed out, and began to sprinkle Mabel's face, sobbing and moaning all the time. Agnes opened the sash door, that led to a stone balcony full of flowers, and their breath came floating into the room.

"Shall I run? shall I call help?" questioned Lina, letting Mrs. Harrington's head fall back upon the crimson cushions of her chair, "I—I am sure Ralph would bring her to."

"Be quiet," answered Agnes Barker, dragging the easy-chair toward the window, where the fragrant wind blew clear and cold into that deathly face.

"If you call any one, let it be Mr. Harrington."

"The General?"

"No, Mr. James Harrington."

"I will go," answered Lina, eagerly.

But the name of James Harrington, even upon those lips, had reached the sleeping sense of Mabel. She made a faint struggle. Her lips quivered with an ineffectual attempt to speak. This brought Lina back.

"Shall I call help, dear mamma? Shall I call help?"

"No!"

The monosyllable was uttered so faintly, that nothing but a loving ear, like Lina's, would have heard it. The warm-hearted girl stooped and kissed Mabel softly upon the forehead, thanking God silently in her heart.

Mabel shrunk from the pure kiss, turned her head abruptly on the cushion, and tears stole through her eyelashes, leaving them dark and moist.

"Madam, is there anything I can do?"

As she spoke, Agnes bent over the helpless woman, and distilled her glances over that pale face, as the upas tree weeps poison.

The unaccountable dislike that Mabel felt for this girl, gave her strength, and she sat up, strong with the reflection that her weakness had so objectionable a witness.

"You here, Miss Barker!" she said with cold dignity; "I have always held this room sacred from all, but my own family."

"I come by invitation," answered Agnes, meekly. "Yesterday afternoon you left a message with my nurse, desiring that I should seek you before entering upon my duties again. This command brought me here, not a wish to intrude."

Mrs. Harrington arose, walked feebly back to the little breakfast-table, and taking up a small teapot of frosted silver, poured some strong tea into a cup, which she drank off clear. Then moving back to her chair, she sat down, evidently struggling for composure.

"I remember," she said very quietly, for Mabel had controlled herself, "I remember leaving this message with a woman who called herself your mother."

Agnes smiled. "Oh, yes, our Southern nurses always claim us as children. 'My mammy,' I think she must have called herself that. Every child has its slave mammy at the South."

"Then you *are* from the South, Miss Barker?"

"Did not General Harrington tell you this, madam?"

"I do not recollect it, if he did," answered Mabel, searching the girl's face with her clear eyes; "in truth, Miss Barker, I made so few inquiries when you entered my family, that your very presence in it is almost a mystery to me. General Harrington told me you were well-educated, and an orphan. I found that he was correct in the latter point, but was somewhat astonished yesterday afternoon to hear the woman whom I met, claim you as her daughter."

"You do not understand our Southern ways, Mrs. Harrington, or this would not appear so singular. With us the tie between a slave nurse and her child, is next to parentage."

"Then this woman is a slave?" questioned Mabel.

"She has been, madam, but though I had nothing else in the world, when I became of age, she was made a free woman."

"But she is not black—at least, in the dim light, I saw no traces of it."

Again Agnes smiled a soft unpleasant smile, that one would put no faith in:

"Perhaps it was that which rendered her so valuable, but black or white, the woman you saw was a born slave."

"And how does she support herself in that solitary house?"

"She has a garden, and some poultry. The woods around afford plenty of dry fuel, and my own humble labors supply the rest."

Mabel became thoughtful and ceased to ask questions. The governess stood quietly waiting. All her answers had been straightforward and given unhesitatingly, but they did not bring confidence or conviction with them. Still Mrs. Harrington was silenced for the time, and remained in deep thought.

"May I retire, madam?" said the governess at last, drawing slowly toward the door.

Mabel started from her reverie.

"Not yet. I would know more of you, of your parents, and previous life. Where we intrust those most dear to us, there should be a perfect knowledge and profound confidence."

"Of myself I have nothing to say," answered Agnes, turning coldly white, for she was a girl who seldom blushed. All her emotions broke out in a chilly pallor. "Of my parents all that can be said is told, when I repeat that they left me with nothing but an honorable name, and this old woman in the wide world."

Her voice broke a little here, and this struck Mabel with a shade of compassion.

"But how did you chance to come North?"

"I entered a Louisianian family as governess, directly after my parents' death. They brought me North in the summer, recommended me to General Harrington, and I remained."

Nothing could be more simple or frankly spoken. Agnes, as I have said, was pale; but for this, she might have seemed unconscious that all this questioning was mingled with distrust.

Mabel had nothing more to say. The feelings with which she had commenced this conversation, were not in the slightest degree removed, and yet they seemed utterly without foundation. She waved her hand uneasily, murmuring, "you may go," and the governess went out softly as she had entered.

"Can I stay with you, mamma?" pleaded Lina, creeping timidly up to Mabel's chair.

"I am weary," answered Mrs. Harrington, closing her eyes, and turning aside her head. "Let me rest awhile!"

"But you will kiss me before I go?" pleaded the gentle girl.

"Yes, child," and Mabel kissed that white forehead with her quivering lips.

"Is it with your whole heart, mamma?"

Mabel turned away her face, that Lina might not see how it was convulsed. So the young girl went out from the boudoir, grieved to the verge of tears.

After they were gone, Mabel grew strong again, and began to pace to and fro in the boudoir, as if striving to outstrip the pain of thinking. The accident had left her nerves greatly shattered, and it was difficult to concentrate the high moral courage that formed the glory of her woman's nature. Thus she walked to and fro in a sort of vague, dreamy passion, her thoughts all in a tumult, her very soul up in arms against the new struggle forced upon her. Sometimes Mabel wrung her hands with a sudden gush of sorrow. Her eyes would fill and her lips quiver, and she would look around upon the sumptuous objects in her room, as if seeking out something among all the elegance that filled it, which might have power to comfort her.

There was no bitter or bad passion in the heart of Mabel Harrington. She had only laid down her burden for a moment, and finding its weight doubled, shrank from taking it up again. But she had a brave, strong heart, that after a little would leap forward, like a checked race-horse to its duty. This might not have been, had she always relied upon her own strength, which so far as human power can go, was to be confided in. But Mabel had a firmer and holier reliance, which was sure in the end to subdue all these storms of trouble, and prepare her for the battle of feelings, which was to be fought over and over again before she found rest.

After a time, Mabel Harrington stole gently back to her easy-chair, and kneeling down, buried her face in the cushions. Fair-Star, which had been following her up and down, wondering at her distress, and looking in that agitated face with his intelligent eyes, came and lay softly down with his head resting on the folds of her shawl, where it swept over the floor. He knew with his gentle instinct, that she was quieter now, and with a contented whine lay down to guard her as she prayed.

While she was upon her knees, a rustling among the flowers in the balcony made Fair-Star rise suddenly to his fore feet, and cast a vigilant glance that way. He saw a hand cautiously outstretched, as if to put back the trails of a passion-flower, and then a dark figure stole along behind the screen of blossoms, and crouching down, peered cautiously through the leaves into the room. Fair-Stair dropped his head; he had recognized the intruder, and, not having any very definite ideas of etiquette, concluded that the governess had a right to crouch like a thief behind that screen of flowers, if her fancy led that way. For a little time her presence kept the pretty hound restless, but it was not long before Agnes had so draped the passion-flower that it entirely concealed her person, and then Fair-Star betook himself entirely to his mistress. A soul-struggle does not always break forth in words, or exhaust itself in cries. The heart, like its Maker, has a still small voice, which God recognizes the more readily, because it is like his own.

Mabel came with no rush of stormy passion before the Lord. The very force of her anguish was laid aside as she bowed her proud head, and meekly besought strength to suffer and be still—to struggle for the right. Now and then her clasped hands were uplifted, once the spy on the balcony caught a glimpse of her face. It was luminous and lovely, spite of the anguish to be read there.

At last she arose, and seating herself, remained for some time in thoughtful silence, her arms folded on her bosom, her eyes full of troubled light, looking afar off, as if she were following the angels with her eyes that had been gathering over her as she knelt.

After awhile, Mabel arose, and walking across the room more composedly, unlocked a little escritoir of ebony, from which she drew forth a book bound in white vellum, and embossed with gold. Seating herself at the escritoir, she began to search among the trinkets attached to her chatelaine for a small key, which she inserted in a little heart beset with rubies, which locked the golden clasps of the book together.

All this time Agnes Barker was watching each movement of her benefactress with the eyes of a serpent. She saw the tiny heart fly open, and the manuscript pages of the book exposed. She saw Mrs. Harrington turn these pages, now slowly, now hurriedly—reading a line here, a sentence there, and more than once two or three pages together. Sometimes her fine eyes were full of tears. Sometimes they were reverently uplifted to Heaven, as if seeking strength or comfort there; but more frequently she pursued those pages with a sad thoughtfulness, full of dignity.

After she had been confined with reading, perhaps an hour, she dipped a pen into the standish on her escritoir, and began to write slowly, as if weighing every word as it dropped from her pen. Then she closed the book, locked it carefully, and securing it in the escritoir again, walked slowly toward her bed-chamber, which opened from the boudoir, evidently worn out and ready to drop down with exhaustion. A slight disturbance in the passion-vine betrayed that Agnes Barker had changed her position, and now commanded a view through the open door of Mabel's chamber. She saw the poor lady move wearily toward a bed, which stood like a snowdrift in the midst of the room, and pulling the cloud of white lace, which enveloped it, aside, with her trembling hands, fell wearily down upon the pillows, and dropped away into tranquil slumber, like a child that had played itself to sleep in a daisy field.

Mabel had asked for strength, and God gave her its first tranquilizing element—rest.

Agnes stood motionless till the lace curtains above the sleeper closed again, leaving nothing visible upon the snowy white beneath, but the calm, sleeping face of Mabel Harrington, gleaming as it were through a cloud, and the folds of her azure shawl, that lay around her like fragments of the blue sky. Mrs. Harrington had evidently sunk into a heavy slumber, but Agnes kept her concealment some time after this, for Fair-Star was still vigilant, and she shrunk from his glances as if they had been human.

But the dog crept into his mistress's chamber at last, and then Agnes Barker stole from her fragrant hiding-place, and entered the boudoir again.

The escritoir was closed, but Agnes saw with joy that the key still remained in its lock, and that Mrs. Harrington had left her watch upon a marble console close by. Stealing across the room, and holding her wicked breath, as if she felt that it would poison the air of that tranquil room, she crept to the escritoir, turned the key, and stealthily drawing forth the vellum book, dropped on one knee, while she reached forth her hand, drawing the watch softly to her lap.

There was a quiver in her hands as she unlocked that little golden heart, forcing it asunder with a jerk, for the dog came back just then, and stood regarding her with his clear, honest eyes. She strove to evade him, and gleams of angry shame stole across her cheeks as she laid down the watch, and stole, like the thief that she was, through the sash door, along the pretty labyrinth of flowers, and into another door that opened upon one end of the balcony.

And Mabel slept on, while this ruthless girl was tearing the secret from her life.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE VELLUM BOUND BOOK.

It was an uncomfortable breakfast-table to which the Harringtons sat down that morning. The lady of the house and Lina, its morning-star, were both absent, and the servant, who stood at the coffee-urn ready to distribute its contents, was a most unsatisfactory substitute.

Their absence left a gloom on everything The very morning seemed darkened by the want of their smiling faces and cheerful garments. A breakfast-table at which no lady presides, is always a desert—and so was this; spite of its glittering silver, its transparent china, and the warm October sunshine, which penetrated the broad eastern window with a thousand cheerful flashes, scarcely broken by the gorgeous tree boughs, or the climbing vines that waved and clustered around it.

Gen. Harrington was gracefully out of sorts, as your polished man of the world sometimes proves when his circle of admirers is a household one. The absence of his wife was an annoyance which, under the circumstances, he could not well resent, but that Lina should have been so indolent, or so forgetful, he considered a just cause of complaint. Thus in that smooth, ironical way, which usually expressed the General's anger, he began a series of complaints, that in another might have been considered grumbling, but in a man of Gen. Harrington's perfect breeding, could have been only an expression of elegant displeasure.

Ralph, radiant with his new-born happiness, and full of generous enthusiasm, strove to dissipate this gloom by extra cheerfulness; but this only irritated the grand old gentleman, who stirred the cream in his coffee, and buttered his delicate French rolls in dignified silence, to which his displeasure had at last subsided.

James Harrington, unlike his irritable father, or the bright animation of his brother, was so rapt in heavy thought, that he seemed unmindful of all that was going on. He had cast one quick, almost wild glance at the head of the table as he entered, and after that took his seat like one in a dream.

"Let me," said Ralph, taking the second cup from the servant, and carrying it to the General, "let me help you, father."

"My boy," said the General, "when will you learn to comprehend the refined taste which I fear you will never emulate? You ought to know, sir, that a breakfast without a lady is an unnatural thing in society, calculated to disturb the composure and injure the digestion of any gentleman. As Mrs. Harrington is not able to preside, will you have the goodness to inform Miss Lina that her seat is empty?"

"I—I don't know where Lina is, father. Indeed, I have been searching and searching for her all the morning," answered the youth with a vivid blush.

"Go knock at her door. She may be ill," answered the General, "and, in the meantime, inquire after Mrs. Harrington, with my compliments."

Ralph grew crimson to the temples. A hundred times before, he had summoned Lina from her slumbers, but now it seemed like presumption.

It was strange, but James Harrington had not inquired after either of the ladies; but he looked up with an eager flash of the eyes when the General gave his message; and, as Ralph hesitated, he said in a grave voice—

"What are you waiting for, Ralph? There is something strange in Lina's absence."

"Is there? Do you think so?" exclaimed the excitable boy, and the crimson came and went in flashes over his face. "Oh, brother James, do you think so?"

The General set down his cup, and began tinkling the spoon against its side, softly, but in a way which bespoke a world of impatience. Ralph understood the signal, and disappeared.

"Upon my word, I'd rather be shot," thought Ralph, pausing before the door he had knocked at heedlessly a thousand times during his boyish life; "I wonder what she'll think of it, so coarse and rude to present myself in this fashion after her first sweet sleep. Dear, dear Lina."

He reached forth his hand timidly, and with a pleasant tremble in all the nerves, drew it back, attempted again, and ended with one of the faintest possible taps against the black walnut panelling.

No answer came. The knock was repeated, louder and louder, still no answer came. But at last the door was suddenly opened, and while Ralph stood in breathless expectation, he saw a mulatto chambermaid before him, beating a pillow with one hand, from which two or three feathers had broken loose, and stood quivering in her braided wool.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Master Ralph? Thought, mebbe, it was Miss Lina a-coming back agin. Everything sixes and sevens, I can tell you, since Miss Mabel took sick—now I tell you."

"Can you tell me where Miss Lina is?"

"Don't know nothin' 'bout her, no how—cum in here a little while ago, and didn't speak a word when I said 'Good mornin',' as pleasant as could be—but jist turned her head away and went off, as if I'd been the dirt under her feet."

With these words the exasperated damsel punched her right hand ferociously into the pillow, as if that had been in fault, and added half a dozen more feathers to those already encamped in her dingy tresses.

Ralph was troubled. What could this mean? Lina was never ill-tempered. Something must have grieved her.

"Tell me," he said, addressing the indignant girl, "was anything the matter? Did my—did Miss Lina look ill?"

"Just as blooming as a rose, de fust time I see her, and as white as this pillar when she went out, after I'd expressed myself regarding the ridickelousness of her stuck up ways."

"But where is she now?"

"Don't know. Shouldn't wonder if she's wid de madam—like as not."

Ralph went to his mother's boudoir, and after knocking in vain, softly opened the door. Fair-Star came towards him with his serious eyes and velvet tread, looking back toward the inner room, where Ralph saw his mother through the lace curtains, asleep and alone. He saw also the shrubs in motion at the window, and fancied that a rustling sound came from the balcony.

"Hist, Lina—sweet Lina, it is I!"

Before he reached the balcony, all was still there, but certainly the sound of a closing door had reached him, and the plants at one end of the balcony were vibrating yet.

"Ah, she is teasing me," thought the boy, and his heart rose with the playful thought. "We'll see if Lady Lina escapes in this way."

He opened a door leading from the balcony, and entered a room that had once been occupied by General Harrington's first wife. It was a small chamber, rich in old-fashioned decorations, and gloomy with disuse.

The shutters were all closed, and curtains of heavy silk darkened the windows entirely. Still Ralph could see a high post bedstead and the outlines of other objects equally ponderous. Beyond this, he saw a female figure, evidently attempting to hide itself behind the bed drapery.

Ralph sprang forward with his hands extended.

"Ah, ha, my lady-bird, with all this fluttering I have found you!"

There was a quick rush behind the drapery, which shook and swayed, till the dust fell from it in showers. Again Ralph laughed, "Ah, lapwing, struggle away, I have you safe."

He seized an armful of the damask drapery as he spoke, and felt a slight form struggling and trembling in his embrace. Instinctively his arms relaxed their hold, and with something akin to terror, he whispered:—

"Why, Lina darling, what is this? I thought that we loved each other. You did not tremble so, when I held you in my arms yesterday!"

A smothered cry, as of acute pain, broke from beneath the drapery, and then, while Ralph stood lost in surprise, the curtains fell rustling together, and the faint sound of a door cautiously closed, admonished him that he was alone.

"Lina, dear Lina," he called, reluctant to believe that she had left him so abruptly.

There was no answer, not even a rustle of the damask.

He was alone. When satisfied of this, the young man found his way to the light again. But for the terror and evident recoil of the person who had evaded him, he would have considered the whole adventure a capital joke, in which he had been famously baffled; but there was something too earnest in that struggle and cry for trifling, and the remembrance left him with a heart-ache.

When Ralph came back to the breakfast-table, he found Lina seated in his mother's place. A faint color came into her cheek as she saw him, but otherwise she was calm and thoughtful. Nay, there was a shade of sorrow upon her face, but nothing of the flush and tumult that would naturally have followed the encounter from which she was so fresh.

Spite of himself, Ralph was shocked. The delicacy of a first passion had been a little outraged by the rude way in which he and Lina had just met, and struggled together, but her composure wounded him still more deeply. "So young, so innocent, and so deceptive," he thought, looking at her almost angrily, "I would not have believed it."

Lina was all unconscious. Full of her own sorrowful perplexities, she experienced none of the bashful tremors that had troubled her in anticipation. That interview in Mrs. Harrington's room had chilled all the joy of her young love. Thus she sat, pale and cold, under the reproachful glances of her lover.

And General Harrington sat watching them with his keen, worldly glances. A smile crept over his lips as he read those young hearts, a smile of cool quiet craft, which no one remarked; but there was destiny in it.

Altogether the breakfast was a gloomy meal. There was discord in every heart, and a foreshadowing of trouble which no one dared to speak about. For some time after his father had left the table, Ralph sat moodily thinking of Lina's changed manner. A revulsion came over him as he thought of his singular encounter with her that morning, and with the quick anger of youth, he allowed her to rise from the table and leave the room without a smile or a word.

James saw nothing that was passing. Self-centred and thoughtful, he was scarcely conscious of their presence.

Lina sought Mrs. Harrington's chamber, but found it perfectly quiet, and the lady asleep. Then she took a straw flat from the hall, and flinging a mantilla about her, went out into the grounds, ready to weep any where, if she could but be alone.

Ralph saw her pass, from the breakfast-room window, and his heart smote him. What had she done, poor, dear girl, to warrant his present feelings? What evil spirit possessed him to think ill of her, so pure, so truly good, as she was?

Ralph took his hat and followed Lina through the grounds, up to a hollow in the hills, where a great white pine tree sheltered a spring that sparkled out from its roots, like a gush of diamonds. It was a heavy day, not without flashes of sunshine, but sombre heaps of clouds drifted to and fro across the sky, and the wet earth was literally carpeted with leaves beaten from their branches by the storm. Amid all these dead leaves, and within the gloomy shadow of the pine, Lina sat alone weeping. She heard Ralph's tread upon the wet foliage, and arose as if to flee him, for with all her gentleness, Lina was proud, and his presence made her ashamed of the tears that her little hand had no power to dash entirely away.

"Lina," said Ralph, holding out his hand, rejoiced by her tears, for he longed to think that she was offended by his rudeness in the dusky room, "Lina, forgive me. I was a brute to wound you with my rough ways."

Lina turned away and sobbed. "It was not that, Ralph. You were only silent, not rude. But I have seen your mother this morning. Oh, Ralph, she will never consent to it—we must give each other up."

"What did she say? Tell me, Lina, tell me!" cried Ralph, full of emotion.

"She said nothing, Ralph, but her face—for a moment it was terrible. Then she fainted!"

"Fainted, Lina!—my mother?"

"I thought her dead, she looked so cold and white. Oh, Ralph, if my words had killed her, what would have become of us?"

"Lina, you astonish me. My mother is not a woman to faint from displeasure. It is the effect of her accident. You should not have spoken to her now!"

"I could not help it. Indeed, I was so happy, and it seemed right and natural to tell her first of all."

"But, what did you tell her, darling?"

Lina looked up, and regarded him gratefully through her tears.

"I don't know—something that displeased her—that almost killed her, I'm afraid."

"Don't cry, don't, Lina—it will all come out right."

"No, no—I feel it—I know it—we must give each other up. The very first hint almost killed her, and no wonder. I did not think of it before—so much kindness made me forget. But what am I? Who am I, to dare equal myself with her son?"

"What are you, Lina!" said Ralph, and his fine face glowed with generous feelings. "What are you! An angel! the dearest, best!"

Lina could not help being pleased with this enthusiasm, but she cut it short, placing her hand upon his mouth.

"It is kind of you to say this, but the facts—oh! these facts—are stubborn things. What am I but a poor little girl, who wandered from, no one can say where, into your house, a miserable waif, drifted by chance upon the charity of your parents? I have no antecedents beyond their kindness—no name, save that which they gave me—no past, no future. Is it for me to receive affection from their son—to climb ambitiously to the topmost branches of the rooftree that sheltered my happiness and my poverty?"

And this was the girl he had dared to think coarse and forward in not blushing at the liberties he had taken. This fair, noble girl, who, with all her delicacy, could utter such true, proud thoughts. For the moment, Ralph would have dropped on his knees, and asked her pardon in the dust. But, beware, young man—he that doubts a beloved object once, will doubt again. When you could, even in passing thought, judge that young creature wrongfully, it was a break in the chain of confidence that should bind true hearts together. Ralph! Ralph! a jewel is lost from the chain of your young life, and once rent asunder, many a diamond bead will drop away from that torn link.

"Believe me," said the youth, burning with enthusiastic admiration of the young creature before him. "These proud words slander the noblest heart that ever beat in a woman's bosom. My mother loves you for yourself. All the better that God sent you to her unsought, as he does the wild flowers. Lina, the pride which reddens your cheek, would be abashed in her presence."

"It is not pride, Ralph, but shame that such thoughts should never have presented themselves before. I have dreamed all my life; up to this morning, I was a child. Now, a single hour has surrounded me with realities. The whole universe seems changed since yesterday."

Lina looked drearily around as she spoke. The hill-sides were indeed changed. The boughs, twelve hours before, so luxuriously gorgeous, were half denuded of their foliage. The over-ripe leaves were dropping everywhere through the damp atmosphere. A gush of wind shook them in heavy clouds to the earth. All the late wild flowers were beaten down and half-uprooted. Nature seemed merely a waste of luxurious beauty thrown into gloomy confusion, among which the high winds tore and rioted.

Lina was chilled by these winds, and drew her shawl closely, with a shivering consciousness of the change. The young man's ardent hope had no power to reassure her. The subtle intuition of her nature could not be reasoned with. Sad and disheartened, she followed Ralph slowly homeward.

A few hours after the scene we have described, the governess was half-way up the hill, on which the house of her mother or nurse stood. She had walked all the way from General Harrington's dwelling, and her person bore marks of a rough passage across the hills. Her gaiter boots were saturated with wet, and soiled with reddish clay. Burdock burs and brambles clung to the skirt of her merino dress, which exhibited one or two serious rents. Her shawl had been torn off by a thicket of wild roses, and she carried it thrown across her arm, too much heated by walking to require it, though the day was cold.

On her way up the hill, she paused, and flinging her shawl on the ground, sat down. Opening the vellum-bound book, she read a few sentences in it, with a greedy desire to know the most important portion of its contents, before resigning it into hands that might hereafter deprive her of all knowledge regarding them. But the winds shook and rustled the pages about, till she was obliged to desist, and at last made her way up the hill in a flushed and excited state, leaving her shawl behind.

The moment she rose to a level with the houses, the door opened, and the woman whom she claimed as a slave nurse, came forth advancing towards Agnes with almost ferocious eagerness. She called out:

"Back again so soon! Then there is news."

"Look here," answered Agnes, holding up the volume, from which the jewelled heart still dangled, cleft in twain as it was. "In less than an hour after entering the house I had it safe. Isn't that quick work?"

"Give it to me—give it to me. You are a good girl, Agnes, a noble girl, worth a hundred of your lily-faced white folks. Give me the book, honey—do you hear?"

But Agnes, who had again opened the volume, held it back.

"Not yet, mother—I have only read a little—don't be too eager—I have a right to know all that is in it!"

"Give me that book. Her secrets belong to me—only to me. Hand over the book, I say!"

"But I wish to read it myself—who has a better right?"

The dark eyes of the slave flashed fire, and her hands quivered like the wings of a bird when its prey is in sight. She clutched fiercely at the book, hissing out her impatience like a serpent.

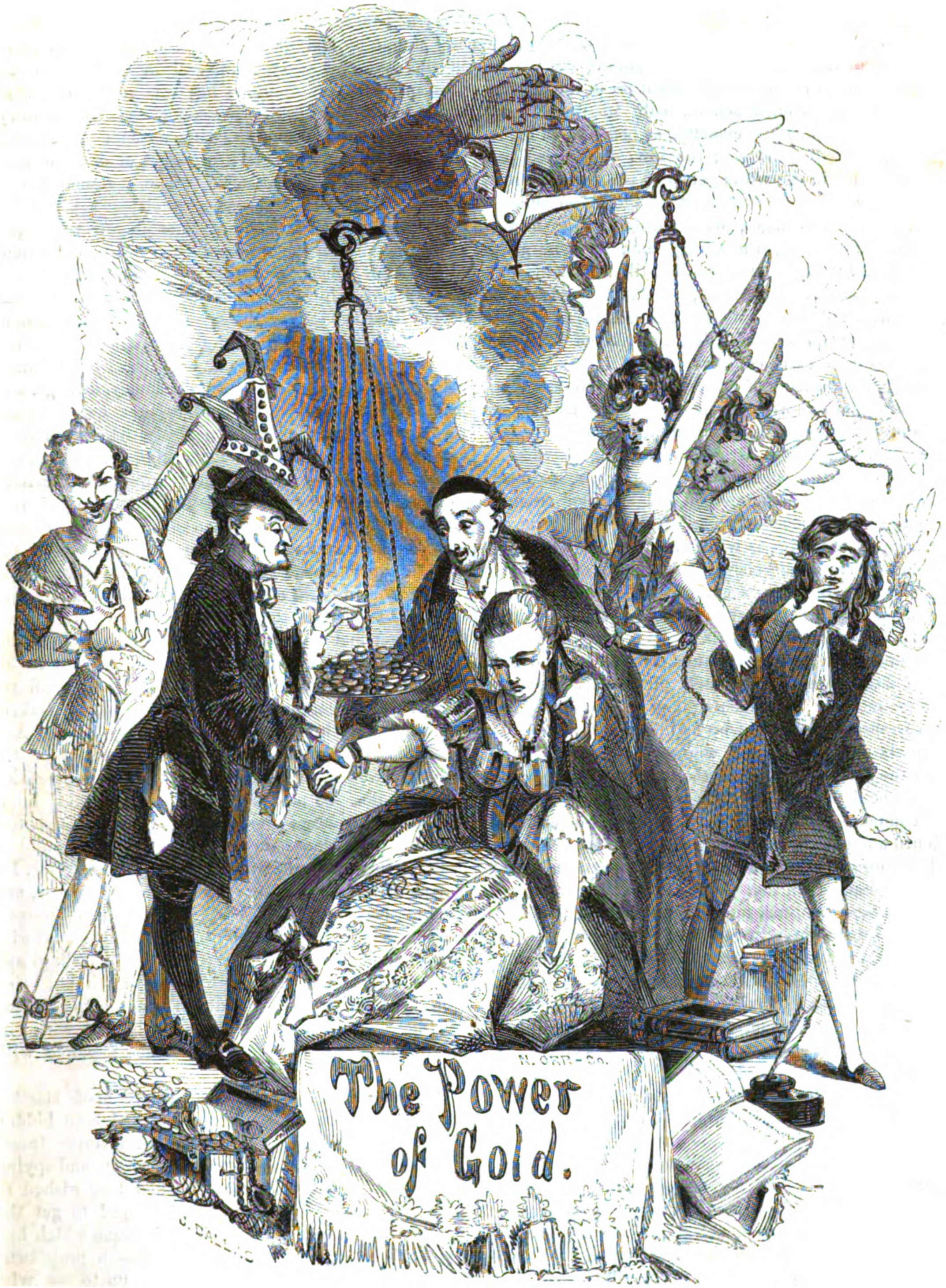
"Take it!" exclaimed Agnes fiercely, but don't expect me to steal for you again."

"Hist!" answered the woman, crushing the book under her arm; "here comes one of the Harringtons on horseback. Clear that face and be ready to meet him, while I go in and hide Mabel Harrington's soul!"

(To be continued.)

THE POETRY OF THE PENCIL,

BY J. A. DALLAS.


The Power of Gold.
N. ORR-Co.
J. DALLAS

MAUD, THE SORCERESS:

A ROMANCE OF YOUTH.

OAKENDEN was the ideal of an English village. The old church, with its square tower covered with ivy, and its avenue of limes up to the west porch; the village-green, where bowls and cricket went on in the summer evenings; the national school, with its rustic porch hidden in jessamine and clematis, as befitteth an orthodox English village school; the low, one-storied parsonage, buried in the white petals of the Ayrshire rose, till it looked like a mass of snow in the green summer days; the trim cottages, with gardens full of flowers and aromatic herbs; the stately Hall, with its grand old park stretching round for miles, till it met the property of young Mr. Rollestone, the squire of Oakenden West; were all so many typical features of an English village of the midland counties, the like of which no other land upon earth contains.

The moral elements of Oakenden were no less characteristic than its physical: its society was as national as its architecture. First in dignity, in popularity, and in wealth, was Squire Gray of the Hall, his wife, his son, and daughter; then came the vicar, Dr. Mathison, a fellow of Magdalene, and an old bachelor; then in the large white house, without garden or field, at the entrance of the village, with urns and statues on its one small terrace, and elaborate iron gates opening into its narrow gravel-walk, was the Hon. Mr. Domville and his handsome London wife; then quiet, gentle, lady-like Mrs. Fortescue, and her four daughters in waning womanhood, in the pretty cottage on the road to Oakenden West, with a conservatory and a shrubbery, and a large meadow all attached; and last of all, young Paul Desprez, the artist, who had been in Oakenden for about six months now, and who was popularly believed to be the greatest painter of the day, and whose health used to be drunk at the little supper-parties after loo and commerce, as the "talented young stranger whose sojourn amongst them was to make Oakenden famous."

But thoroughly English as Oakenden was, and small, conventional, sifted, and precise as was its society, it held one most unusual, most unconventional, most un-English inhabitant—the gipsy-girl living in the little cottage down the sandy lane—Maud of the Hollow, as she was called. Maud was no vulgar gipsy—no wandering fortune-teller, obnoxious to the stocks; but merely a solitary young woman, with some kind of small independence for her support. Her manner was good—even lady-like; and perhaps she would have passed without much question, but for the oddity she betrayed in her choice of an abode, and her uncivilized mode of living. Her ways and habits were so strange, no wonder she was made an object of suspicion and of dread. She used to spend days and nights together in the depths of woods, and out in the meadows by moonlight, on heaths and by morasses, ponds and rivers, plucking herbs, and chasing insects, and learning many a secret hidden from the rest of the world. Wherever there were solitude and nature, there was Maud of the Hollow; and there her heart—contracted by the littleness and prejudice and unkindness of man—learned peace in the greatness of creation, and in the love of the Creator. But this mode of life was so unusual that, added to her peculiar appearance and unknown history, it made her name become in time a name of dread to the peasant, and she herself a person of doubtful fame to the educated of Oakenden. The common people thought, to be sure, she was a witch; and picked up horseshoes, laid straws, and said her prayers with equal diligence; and the gentry shook their heads, and though they did not affirm, yet they were afraid there was no good in her. However, be she what she might, it was certain that Oakenden morality held its eyes wide open to her, and that Maud made not a single step which was not watched, commented on, and, alas! condemned. So by degrees she had become a lonely, strange, suspected woman, without a friend to bear her company through this long wilderness of life, without a smile between her and despair. Even kind Mrs. Fortescue, who still continued her cottage visitings, and charities, as in the days of her legal pastorship, would not visit Maud of the Hollow—"she had daughters," she said; and Paul himself had become so far infected with the popular superstition, stranger and artist as he was, as to overlook all the rare mental beauty in the girl, blinded by the cruel shadow the world threw over her. Horace Gray never met her but to miscall her, and Eva—the tall, beautiful, queenly Eva—joined her brother in his sarcasms; and added to them too. So that of all the human hearts beating beneath the blue sky of Oakenden, none beat kindly for the poor gipsy Maud. And when Maud's soul was dark, as she thought of the heavy sorrows so ruthlessly wrought her by superstition and prejudice, she used to go out into the broad home of nature, and forget them there; doing her best, too, to love those who hated her, to forgive, pity, and to pray for them; for underneath all her wild exterior, lay as true a woman's nature as ever received sorrow, and gave out blessing; and if it was a nature misunderstood and slandered, it was so only because of its superiority to those around her; being stronger in its feelings and deeper in its thoughts than others. And without being vain or self-deceptive, Maud could not help acknowledging this to herself; and so she blessed with one breath the gift whose consequences she deplored with the other.

One afternoon the clatter of horses' hoofs startled her from under the bushes where she had been hidden almost the whole day, watching her favorite insect world in some of its mysterious economy, and spying out a secret of transformation she had long wished to know. It was a secret by which she hoped to get the clue to a wide range of entomological arcana which had long baffled her. Curiosity, at all times a prominent feature in Maud's character, roused her up to see who it was that ventured down her lane; and running through the shrubbery-path down to the privet-hedge below, her small dark face, with raven hair, and glittering eyes, showed itself to Horace and Eva Gray, galloping in the sunlight.

"The children of the Hall," thought she—"what can bring them down the haunted lane of the Hollow, the lane which not the strongest man in Oakenden would pass through after nightfall, and which the gentry never venture down at any time?"

Those bright young heads turned as they passed the thick privet-hedge of Maud's garden: and Eva, laughing like a merry bird trilling in the sky, when she saw the dusky face peering out among the shining leaves, checked her bay-mare, and asked how all her relations had been behaving lately? "For you know, Maud," she added, "that you are something more or less than human, and that all the goblins and imps, and witches, and bad spirits, which are so plentiful in the Hollow, come there at your bidding."

"Then how dare you, Miss Eva, come here?" asked Maud: "you are not very famous for courage, nor your brother there, great and strong as you both are."

"We are protected, Maud, by our own innocence," said Horace roughly. "Witches have no power over Christians, so that is why we defy you, Maud, and laugh you to scorn;" and he shook his whip at the elfin face among the leaves, more boyishly than brutally, though brutality was not wanting either—at no time wanting, for it made up the very fundamental element of Horace Gray's character.

"Well done, Master Horace!" retorted Maud, contemptuously. "It is a fine amusement for you to insult Maud of the Hollow; a manly pastime for a great boy of nineteen to annoy a weak girl. If I had a brother as big as you, Master Horace, I wonder if you would call me bad names then!" And Maud's large, black eyes rained out contempt and anger like fire from beneath their lids: for though she tried hard to subdue her natural impetuosity, and her keenness to take offence, it was not always possible to hold such check and string over herself as to make her patient and forgiving all at once; and there was something in the tone of Horace's insults which roused her blood more than anything else.

"Come away, Horace," whispered Eva; "Maud is angry, and I am afraid of her when she is angry. She looks so dreadful, I am sure she will do us some harm if we tease her any longer." And the two young creatures started off without another word—Horace vainly endeavoring to look heroic and indifferent, and Eva showing more terror than might have been expected from anything so grand and queenly.

Maud stood by the hedge, listening to their voices for a long time; and when they had died away, she crept back to her lair among the laurels, feeling very sad and lonely.

"They call me dwarf, witch, elf, imp," said Maud; "they laugh at me for my swarthy skin—and it is swarthy by the side of theirs, fair as flowers, and bright as morning clouds; they ridicule me for being small and deformed; and Horace threatens to crush me with one blow of his great hand; and Eva pretends not to see me when she passes me like a queen, and looks down on the ground as if looking for a grasshopper, when she hears my voice; and other impertinences they are always offering me, with even more malice and cruelty in them. And I sometimes get angry, though often it is only a pretence. But I should not be angry with these two foolish prattling children; they have been warped by the fatal education of prejudice—so far warped, as to forget the claims of a common humanity, because of a shade more or less of brown on the cheek, or an inch more or less of height to the figure. No, I do not blame them! They repeat, parrot-like, what they have been taught, and the responsibility of this sin of theirs rests with older heads. And it is a sin to pour unmerited sorrow into the cup of any human life! No, I do not blame them! A curse is laid on me, which I must bear, and of which they work out one small portion; the form and features of a gnome, with the feelings of a passionate humanity; the blinding strength of love, the warm idolatry of beauty, with the impossibility to be loved, and the consciousness of deformity! I, who could love these two young things in all their glorious youth and beauty, must feel myself shut out from them, as from all others, because of this fearful curse of outward unloveliness!" And then she turned her face to the ground, and her tears fell like heavy rain among the dry leaves of the fallen evergreens. "And yet it is not a fault that I am dark and small," she said, drying her tears; "born no one knows where, of an outcast mother, whose gipsy-home was of all countries, whom no nation claimed, and no kinsman owned. It is not a sin that I am not fair and queenly, like Eva; nor like Horace, strong and beautiful. But it is made a fault, and I suffer the penalties of a sin all the same. She is like a princess—she is so grand and noble in her beauty; while I creep along the earth, like a forgotten reptile at the foot of the golden throne whereon she sits like a queen. But yet, I would not change my stunted form and swarthy skin for Eva's glorious beauty, if I must take Eva's mindless brain as well. I can feel; I can love; while Eva—the bright morning star in the sky, knows as little of human sympathies as she! Yet, oh, she is so beautiful that one forgives all her sins and short-comings, and almost could love her solely for the sake of that beauty! And Horace, too, rough, rude, uncultivated as he is; for beauty is so divine a gift from God, that we must needs worship it; and ah!" added Maud with a sigh, "we always prize so much the good we have not." And Maud thrust herself into the sunlight, pleasing herself with a sad pleasure, by exaggerating in the slanting rays the slight deformity indicated rather than developed in her person.

While standing thus, her deformity hidden now in the long, black hair which she often allowed to fall loose from a scarlet cincture round her head, she heard again the the tramp of hoofs careering boisterously down the hill; and a moment after, a furious plunge, a woman's shrill scream, and Horace's voice calling loudly for help, woke up the still evening.

One bound, like the spring of a gazelle, cleared the hedge, and Maud, her long hair streaming behind her, ran breathless to where Eva lay fainting on the ground, Horace vainly endeavoring to arouse her by a clumsy succession of boyish restoratives. Paul Desprez, pale and agitated, was holding the horses; Eva's kicking and plunging violently, bathed in foam and trembling, while the heavy chestnut ridden by Horace, fed tranquilly by the wayside.

"Oh, Maud, perhaps you may be of some use," said Horace, in his off-hand, lordly way. "Eva has been thrown by this cursed brute, you see. Just as we passed the Hollow Lane, it took to kicking like a mad thing; and look at her now—one would think she was bewitched." The word struck his own ear. He cast a sudden glance on Maud, and turned very pale. "Who knows?" he thought to himself. "We vexed Maud this morning; perhaps she has bewitched the bay mare out of revenge." He placed himself between the gipsy-girl and his sister. "On second thoughts, Maud," he said, "you cannot be of any use here in the middle of the road; you may go home. Paul, give me Eva's horse to hold; and do you ride off to the Hall for help; I will wait here for you. And you, Maud, pray don't stay here. I must insist on your not staying with me—and Eva."

"Don't be a baby, Horace," retorted Maud, sharply; "and don't go to the Hall, Mr. Paul, till I tell you to do so. Help me to take your sister into my cottage, Horace—Master Horace, I mean—and don't carry her home like a corpse, when nothing is really the matter with her. Come! do as you are bid, and don't stand there like a frightened school-boy. Carry her in your arms, and I will soon make her well again."

"I carry my sister into your cottage, Maud!" cried Horace, petrified with amazement.

"Yes, into my cottage, Master Horace."

"That I certainly will not do," he cried, tossing his beautiful bright head, and looking very willful and very handsome.

"I always knew you were a coward, Horace, in spite of your six feet," cried Maud, disdainfully. "A great boy-baby, and nothing more. But your cowardice must not be allowed to harm your sister. You may think me a witch if you like, but I must show her that I am a nurse and sister."

"Maud—sister—impertinent—house—witch—Eva!" stammered Horace, fairly aghast at the tone of command assumed by Maud.

Maud turned her back on him, and gave a peculiar cry. A wild-looking foreign lad, known far and near as the Hobgoblin, rushed out of the shrubbery, as suddenly as a stage-imp. Maud said a few words in a strange language, and Lemuel caught up poor Eva in his long, sinewy, ape-like arms, and bounded off with her like a leopard with his prey. The whole passed so quickly, that neither Horace nor Paul could interfere. Paul flung the reins of the bay-mare to Horace, and rushed after the lad, calling to him loudly to stop.

"What! is Paul Desprez so far infected with Oakenden folly, as to prefer perhaps the death of a girl he loves, to her life from the hands of Maud the gipsy?" said the girl quietly, speaking with an unruffled voice, though running by the young man's side.

"It is not you, Maud," cried Paul, his words coming in a series of convulsive gasps, "but that vagabond boy. Oh, Maud, if you have woman's heart in you, rescue her from his arms! He will love her if he sees her face and bewitch her to love him, if he breathes on her. Oh! Maud, Maud, give her to me!"

"Nonsense, Paul. What madness you are talking! Lemuel is not a god; he is nothing miraculous. Let him carry her; you are not strong enough."

"No, no," sobbed Paul, throwing up his hands.

At this moment Lemuel stopped to open the little wicket-gate leading through Maud's garden.

"Here, Lemuel, let the young gentleman take Miss Eva," said Maud quietly.

The lad looked astonished, but, without speaking, placed his burden in Paul's arms.

A fainting woman of Eva's height and development is no light burden; besides, Paul, never very strong at any time, at this moment was overpowered with emotion, and exhausted with his rapid pursuit: he staggered beneath Eva's weight, could not move a step, and finally would have fallen, if Horace had not come up at that moment—and, both together, they carried her into Maud's cottage.

Horace shuddered as they crossed the threshold. The evening had come, and the last rays of the sun made a kind of mournful glory round the outer world, while all within Maud's house looked dark and gloomy as the grave.

"There!" said Maud majestically, pointing to a deep couch covered with a tiger's skin. The young men obeyed her gesture, and laid Eva on the couch. Horace looked undignifiedly frightened; and Paul, divided between his artist's appreciation of the arrangements of that cottage-room, and his lover's agony at Eva's prolonged faint, was distressed, excited, and bewildered; while Maud was mysterious and important, doing her best to convince Horace of her supernatural powers, and to make him believe her a witch—or worse.

Yet Paul noticed that she was prompt and careful about Eva, and that the most matter-of-fact nurse in an hospital could not have been more quick and clever than this strange-looking dwarf of the Hollow. She loosened the ribbon round the girl's-throat, and felt the blue veins carefully; she passed her hand rapidly through the golden flood of hair falling on the tiger's skin, to see if there was any wound on the head; and then she took a small bottle of some powerful essence, and shook a few drops over the fainting face. Eva sighed, opened her eyes, moved restlessly, smiled softly, and a few gentle pencillings of color came into her cheeks like the first small rays of morning. Maud stood by her, her clasping fingers of dusky brown holding that long pearl-colored hand, and her falling hair of jet dropping on the golden tresses spread all abroad. Her eyes were fixed intently on Eva, who seemed, as if under a spell, constrained to become gentle and loving against her nature.

"Your hand is sprained," then said Maud caressingly, chafing that delicate member carefully.

"Oh Maud!" cried Eva with a reproachful glance, as if it had been Maud who had done her that injury.

"Well," cried the gipsy, answering her look, "why do you blame me?"

"You bewitched the horse!" exclaimed Eva, and then she turned her face away and burst into tears.

"Don't cry, Eva," said Horace, coming to her, and patting her head. "Be a good girl—that's a dear! You will soon get well, for Dr. Fairfield shall be sent for, and you know he will do more than all this absurd quackery could, even if Maud understood what she was about."

"Eva—Miss Gray!" almost sobbed poor Paul, "for our sakes, control yourself. You do not know what anguish you are causing us."

A blush of gratified vanity came on Eva's cheek; but she did not stop her tears for all that; indeed her sobs became more hysterical, as Maud was keen enough to notice, though her head was turned from the group. She was searching among a collection of queer vases and bottles, stuffed birds, quaint boxes, charms, amulets, and a heap of jewels flung carelessly together; and now she held in her hand a strip of linen, curiously marked along and across with foreign characters, in purple, and blue, and scarlet; and she held also a case, of no manufacture of this time or country, shining with various hues curiously blended; like an opal, but coarser. She looked back, raising her eyes to the agitated face of the artist, and as she looked, a mingled expression of contempt and pity came into her eyes, and then a look of sorrow, and then a look of love.

"A sprain is not dangerous, Paul Desprez," she said coldly. "A woman of my race would laugh at such a trifle as has caused Miss Eva those bitter tears, and you such bitter anguish. A child of my race would make a play of a hurt no worse than this, and not even the most devoted heart among our men——. Well, the black blood of the gipsy must needs be something different to your fair bloods, and I am well content it should be so." This was said in a low tone, more as if she was speaking to herself than to an audience. "Come, Miss Eva," she then added authoritatively, "dry your eyes. You are making them red and ugly."

"Insolent!" muttered Horace.

"Unfeeling!" said Eva half aloud.

"What blindness and what coldness!" thought Paul.

Maud did not speak. Something stole up into her face—an undefinable expression of intensest feeling. Her great eyes looked moist and loving, but oh, so sad! and once she raised them heavily to Paul's face, and then she dropped them on the ground musingly, as one measuring a sister's wealth by her own poverty.

Eva dried her eyes with a frightened glance, fascinated and subdued; while Maud folded back the dainty cuff of snowy linen, and bathed that tender wrist in a white creamy substance, which dropped in large masses, soft and sweet, from the curious old opaline bottle. She then bound up the wrist and hand in her strip of linen, and fastened all together with golden thread. "Now, you may all go home," she said quietly. "The ointment and the linen are both magic, Eva, and you will be well to-morrow. By the time the thrushes begin to sing in the evening, you may ride the bay-mare right into the heart of the Hollow. So you see, Master Horace, witches may be of use sometimes; and if I bewitched the bay mare, as you both think, out of revenge for your impertinence this morning, I have healed the hurt I caused at very little trouble or cost; and perhaps given you both a useful lesson," she added with a low laugh.

"Thank you, Maud," said Eva, tossing her head. "But I would rather be without your lessons, if they are to come in the shape of falls, fainting-fits, and sprains."

"Oh!" said Maud coldly, "you are such a featherhead, it is necessary to give you a severe experience, if one gives you any at all."

Eva was very angry. She flung herself off the couch with the gesture of a petted child, red and pouting. As she raised her head, all her fair hair fell blinding into her blue eyes; at this moment, she looked lovely. Her crimson cheeks; her red and pouting lips, a trifle thick and full; her golden hair in long waving masses over her shoulders, and veiling her broad white forehead and her large blue eyes; her graceful figure, supple and well developed: all formed a lovely picture, which none could help admiring.

They all left the cottage—Eva mingling sarcasms with her thanks; Horace lordly and innocent; and Paul taking about as much thought of Maud as of the cricket chirping on her floor; but his indifference, at least, had nothing brutal and wounding in it, and Maud was grateful for even that small measure of human recognition—so far had injustice and injury tamed a proud and impatient spirit.

"She must be a witch or something worse," pouted Eva, breathing deeply when they had left the cottage.

"She is a stupid little dwarf," said Horace, tossing his head; "and pretends to a vast deal of power and knowledge she does not possess. She is only a mountebank after all!"

Paul said nothing. Maud was only a name to him now. He was walking by the side of Eva's horse, and had no world beyond. The sun was setting, and long lines of crimson threaded the sky, like veins on a blushing brow; a soft warm air crept along the earth like a stealing spirit from the home of night, and the whole voice of nature was one sweet hymn of peace and beauty. Paul saw the sunset mirrored in Eva's eyes, when she stooped her head to speak to him pleasantly; and all of nature, of heaven, and of humanity was gathered in those eyes for him. He saw nothing else, knew nothing else, lived in nothing else. He was by Eva's side; and life gave him the full measure of a poet's ecstasy. Boy-poet that he was! he saw an angel and heard a muse in the woman he adored.

But Maud wandered in the meadow and the wood until the moon had risen and set; and the dews of morning glittered in the sun before the lonely gipsy-girl pushed aside the curtain over her cottage door.

Tears were on her cheek and a strange light lay in her eyes when she entered; and then she knelt down, and a prayer burst from her quivering lips: "God give me to be loved also."

It had long been a custom with Paul Desprez to keep a journal. Since he had lived in Oakenden, this journal, in the beginning a mere pleasure, had now become a necessity; it was his only friend, his only confidant. To it he confided all his highest thoughts and purest aspirations, his secret sorrows, and the grief of genius unsatisfied with itself; and from it he drew consolation, as if from the living words of a friend. He had also a fancy connected with this journal, which made it doubly precious to him. He had created an Ideal for himself, which he called his Egeria, and with which he used to hold long conversations, he said, in the mornings when the stars were fading out of the sky, and when all nature was fresh with youth and strength. All that he had of good in him came from this Egeria; all his best thoughts and highest endeavors were from that hidden voice; those sweet, low whispers heard by the soul alone, which seemed to teach and guide him, and by which he struggled with the evil of his nature, up to greater good and purity. He devoutly believed in this spirit, thinking it a foreshadowing of what life would give him in the future, and regarding it more as a prophecy than a fancy. And as all men are mad more or less on one point, if not on more, in their lives, this Egeria may be considered as the stationary madness of Paul Desprez.

This preface was necessary for the right understanding of the following extracts from the journal:—

"*July* 5. This summer-life of mine is sadly enervating. I look back on the severe discipline of my student life as on another existence. I am too happy in this idleness; though I cannot entirely get rid of certain stings of conscience, which tell me I am highly reprehensible for neglecting my work in the lethargy of pleasure. I came here originally for leisure; thinking that I could work better out in the free country than if pent up in a town; but a spell, nameless and irresistible, has fallen on me, which has destroyed all my intentions and shipwrecked my resolution. Nature herself has conspired against me. In such glorious weather, what can one do but live—dream out one's days on the grass under the lime-trees, and pass one's nights in prayer beneath the stars? I have lately felt very vividly the influence of my guardian angel, Egeria. I was lying in the shade of the beech-trees by the river, when a hand of light seemed to sketch a glorious portrait on my canvas. I swear it was but a copy that I made. I followed those gleaming lines like a schoolboy; and lo! there came out, all unknown to myself, the exact portrait of Eva Gray! I heard a low voice at my side whisper 'Egeria,' and then I think I must have fainted, for the evening had begun when I roused myself up from my stupor. My Egeria, my attendant spirit, shall it indeed be that I shall ever see thee embodied in human form? Shall I ever sit at the feet of the being who, as woman, will receive my love; as angel, my adoration? With what ecstasy shall I see bodily before me the features I have dreamed of so long? Those features, what will they be like? Long masses of golden hair falling in a heavy curtain over a calm smooth brow; eyes blue as summer skies, like Eva's; hands long, white, and slender; a figure made up of grace and dignity together; manners arch and playful, serene and thoughtful by turns; a voice soft, not powerful, and exquisitely true—such as Eva's. Yes, my Egeria will be like Eva, as beautiful—for she could not be more beautiful—and as good!"

"*July* 19. Another fortnight; but an age in my soul—a generation in my life. Still nothing is done, but all is felt and understood. Eva knows that I love her, and Eva loves me. I see it in her blush when I speak to her, in her upturned eye so suddenly downcast with that sweet look of modesty which fits her so well. I see it in her pretended surprise at seeing me, when I have known that she has been watching for me on the terrace hours long, for I can see the terrace of the Hall across the fields from Oakenden; I see it in her playful smile, malicious with a child's maliciousness, as she half hints at her affection for me, and pouts out her belief that I find her uninteresting and tiresome; I see it in her favorite flowers, which are always those that I prefer, or that I have gathered; and in her favorite airs, which are those that I have praised: in every manner by which a girl's feelings can be expressed unconsciously to herself, have I fathomed the truth of her affection for me; and I have never known such intensity of joy as I have felt since I believed that Eva Gray loved me. Yet I dread to break the sweet spell of silent acknowledgement now between us; I dread to reduce to words the vague bliss on which I am living. It seems as if speech, while it will consolidate, yet will also roughen; as if the delicate hues of this rainbow love will be tarnished by the material breath of words. Will Eva prove the real embodiment of my Egeria? Will the impersonation equal the ideal? In a few days, I shall be able to answer these questions, when I shall have probed her mind to its depths, and unrolled her character like a rare golden fabric before me. I shall then know in Eva the attributes I have dreamed of in Egeria, and shall be loving, trustful, and happy.

"*July* 20. This has been a day of sorrow and evil to me. I walked over to the Hall, intending to tell Eva all that I had in my heart for her, when I met her coming from the shrubbery with young Mr. Rollestone, the squire of Oakenden West. He remained close to us the whole of my stay, and I could not find one solitary moment wherein to speak to Eva alone. I wonder how Eva can like that young man! He could never love her as well as he loves his dogs and horses. Yet if she does not like him, why does she suffer him to be so much with her? Perhaps her parents would like to bring about a marriage between them. Her mother, I remember, did once hint to me something about the two properties of Oakenden Vale becoming one. That was when I first came, and did not understand what she meant. But of course I feel quite at ease on that head. Eva loves me; she almost said so yesterday;

and of course she could not commit such a crime as to trifle with my heart, leave and break it. Yet how confused she looked to-day when I met her leaving the shrubbery; perhaps he had been forcing his pretentions on her, and she had been rejecting them out of greater love for me. She would naturally look confused if she met me then. Yesterday she pressed my hand when I put that white moss-rose into hers: I felt the press distinctly; besides, she blushed as she did so.

"*July* 22. I saw Maud to-day. She started up like an elf from the fern in the park, and whispered in my ear: "Boy, boy! when will you find that your star of heaven is only a marsh-light guiding you to sorrow, perhaps to death?" What did she mean? She disappeared before I could ask her. How or where she disappeared to, I don't know; but she was gone like a shadow. Her words have troubled me much. She could not allude to Eva. It is an insult to her pure heart to couple it with the idea of deception. I am unworthy of her love, if I can doubt it. But I am in a painful state of suspense altogether, and feel doubly the strange kind of lets and hindrances and impalpable barriers that have suddenly risen up between Eva and me. The unrestrained intercourse in which I took such heavenly pleasure, and which was worth all the fixed and definite love in the world, has been abruptly interrupted, and now I never see Eva, unless in company with her brother, or that young Mr. Rollestone.

"*July* 31. I have not seen Eva alone, and I am thinking of writing to her, unless I can snatch some opportunity from the net of precautions in which we are both enveloped. Yet I am so satisfied that she loves me, that I am comparatively happy even under all this wearisome restraint. What a strange creature is that elfin Maud! What a wonderful influence—irresistible and almost terrifying—she has over every one she meets with! Yesternight I met her again, her lap laden with roots and herbs and weeds, and worlds of unsightly insects crawling over them in the light of the full moon. She has no idea of anything loathsome in nature. She says that we are atheists and impious if we reject any of God's creatures, for that there is only beauty and love and fitness in all things. Hers is a grand creed; but I feel myself incapable of adhering to it, for I am more impressed by the outwardly beautiful than by the worthy in life. Maud says that I am too Sybaritic for her faith; and I acknowledge it. Yet she is not indifferent to beauty. Last night she murmured, clasping her hands together: "And I, too, Paul, could die for love of loveliness!" Does she love? I think so. But whom? Not Horace—vain, brutal, and selfish as he is, though so beautiful, and so like Eva. Yet there is love in her eyes and love in her voice, and she bears its impress on all she does; and there are not many in Oakenden on whom she could expend the treasures of her rich heart; for it is rich. Despised though she may be, her heart is a mine of wealth, which no one in Oakenden either understands or equals. How wonderfully fascinating she is! Hours on hours she can keep me entranced, though I know that the broken spell will throw me at Eva's feet. A mysterious kind of awe steals over me when I listen to her, with her low voice and gleaming eyes, pouring forth such deep thoughts and exquisite feelings. She seems like a revelation from the unseen world; and I never feel so holy or so good as when I return from one of our long, long conversations in the woods, or by the river-side. She seems to strengthen all the manly part of my mind; while Eva, dear, womanly, lovely Eva, fascinates me to Armidan indolence. What a difference between those two beings! The one, all poetry; the other, all intellect; the one, Life; the other, Thought! A strange contrast; but very beautiful too. For I confess that I, too, was like the rest, and at one time despised Maud of the Hollow with the unruffled equanimity of superiority. I have learned my mistake, and now acknowledge Maud's rare artistic powers, her grand soul, her powerful brain, and am proud to name myself her champion and friend."

Paul and Eva sat beneath the beech-tree by the river. Eva sat on the mossy bank, and at her feet lay Paul. Horace and the young squire of Oakenden West had gone for a day's excursion, and Paul had seized the opportunity, so long looked for, by which he hoped to secure his worldly happiness for life. A handful of wild-flowers was in Eva's hand, more lay strewn on her lap, a water-lily bud glistened among her golden hair, and a scarlet poppy glowed beside it. Paul had placed them there, and the three colors, the white, the scarlet, and the brownish-gold, showed how well he understood the harmony of contrasts. A deep blush burned Eva's cheek, a look of inquietude troubled her eye, a smile of embarrassment determined to be frivolous, and of hardness overlaying uneasiness, was about her mouth; for Eva felt that the hour had come when the mask must fall. She had worn it long, and had hidden the true face underneath carefully; but it must drop now, and expose the deformity it had not only covered, but transformed.

The youth's face, upturned, was all love, serenity, purity, and trust. He smiled, and fixed his deep eyes full of a love such as angels might feel, on the burning, guilty face above him. But he saw no guilt in that fevered flush, he read no shame in that downcast eye, the hollow smile betrayed no falsehood dragging itself to light, false and hardened still; he read only maiden modesty, and the pure happiness of a girl's first love, where a keener eye and a colder heart would have spelt out every letter of the black truth.

"Eva," said Paul, "few words are necessary between us now. Our hearts have spoken, though our lips have been mute; and our spirits have met and understood each other, while yet the stirred air had not echoed one word of the wakened breath. I love you, Eva. Why do you cover your face, and shake your head? You have known it long—you have seen it: yes, Eva, fostered and returned it. You are too good and pure to have played me false; and by every sign that woman could give, you have told me that you loved me. And Eva, it was so dear, to me to watch it stealing out, like a listening angel, in unguarded looks.

(For continuation, see p. 170.)

ALICE CLARE;

OR, MY PROPOSAL.

RIGHT well do I recollect my first meeting with Alice Clare. It was during a summer vacation. An old friend had sent to me an imperative command to come and spend the dog days with him at his retreat—a delightful place upon the banks of a little lake in the centre of the State—and very glad was I to accept the invitation. I had passed a laborious year—and with a boyish exultation of spirits, I burst the thousand Lilliputian ligaments of duty and habit, and prepared for a brief period of full, unrestrained, and perfect freedom. As I stood upon the steamer's deck, and saw the city recede from view, I banished it from memory as well as from sight—cast into utter forgetfulness its cares and labors, and turned the whole strength of my thoughts and feelings upon the pleasures before me. I determined to take a delight in everything. I stepped back a dozen years of existence and became a boy again. The very smoke that rolled out of the huge smoke-pipe; the light, feathery steam that escaped, and floated like a bird over the waves; the groups of passengers with their strong contrasts of ages, conditions, and manners; the motion and play of the water; the foamy waves that rolled off from the steamer's wake; the shore, with its changing aspects—out of all these things, I extracted pleasure. It is a great thing when we are resolved to be pleased. There isn't a pebble in our path that won't contribute to such an end, if we will only permit it.

My buoyancy of feeling was not soon exhausted. As I approached the domicil of my friend, I refused to be whirled along the dusty road, when a cross-cut over the fields would bring me sooner in point of time, and pleasanter in many ways, up to his door. So I sent black Abe along with the carriage, and leaping over the fence, struck a path across the fields. As my foot touched the sod, I fairly threw up my hat for joy. The turf, so springy and elastic, was delightful to feet long used to unyielding granite pavements. The air was so soft and sweet, that I expanded my chest, and opened my mouth wide to take in the delicious draught. I feared even to look at the grasshoppers that bounced about my feet. The new spring clover seemed to yield fragrance as I pressed it beneath my tread. My blood ran quickly with new life, and tingled through my veins. The wind which came murmuring among the tree tops, lifted my locks, and tossed them about with delicious freedom. The mere sensation of existence were at that moment, exquisite happiness. I was content simply to *be.*

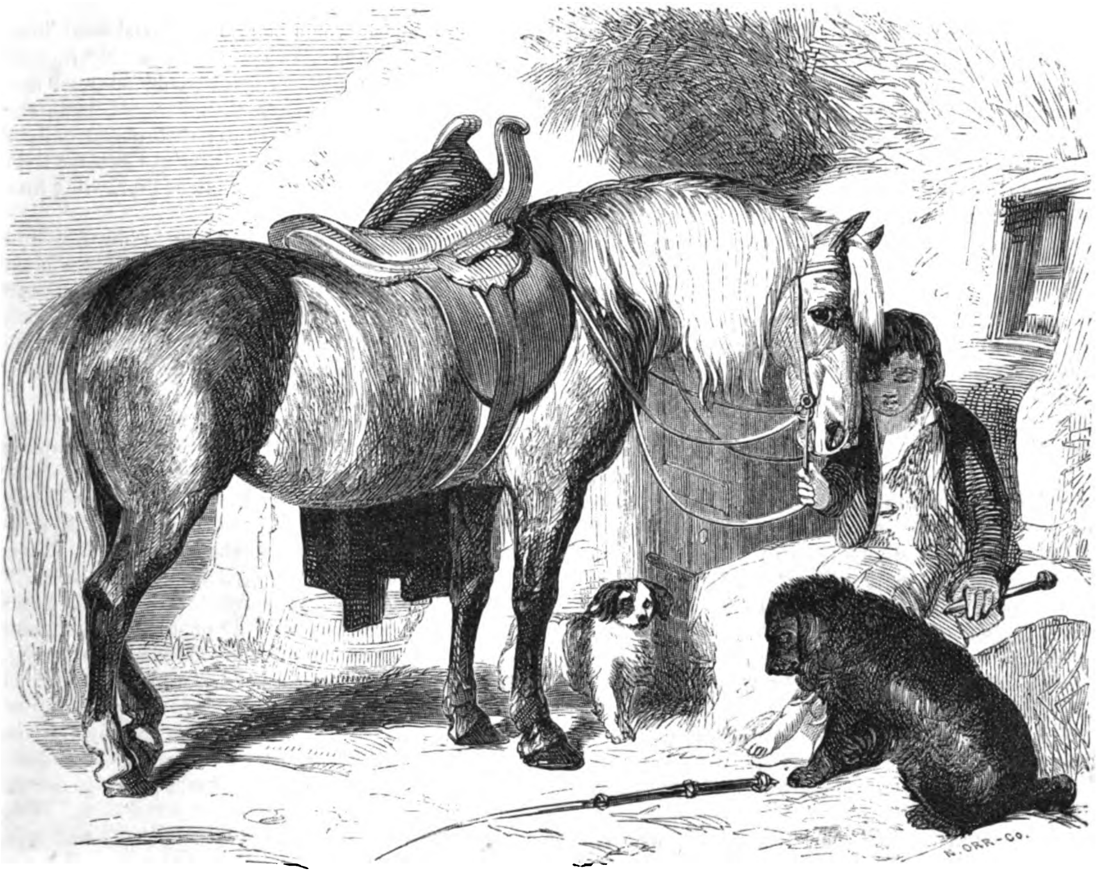
It was near sunset when I came up to the house. As I approached, my friend came running out with both hands extended, and he shook me such a welcome, that my fingers ache now to think of it. Then he marched up a troop of blooming daughters to present, the eldest of which was a fine, full-grown young woman; then after a brief delay appeared the mistress of the house, grown buxom since I had seen her, but happy, and proud enough, one could see, of her husband and her brood of little ones.

It was really an exquisite spot—this home of my friend. I envied him from the bottom of my soul. As that very first evening we all sat in the twilight upon the wide, low verandah, and looked out through a shadowed vista of arching boughs, upon the waters of the lake, just tinted with a reflection from the sunset sky, watching the shadows gathering beneath the many little wooded islands which dotted the lake, listening to the chirp of the cricket, and the cry of the whip-poor-will, there was a calm so sweet and intense came over me, that it seemed to me as if my previous life had been a blank—a perfect death, wherein the soul had known no sensations, and no existence—that this was my first real taste of life in its true, high, and perfect meaning. And when later in the evening, Mary, the eldest daughter, went to the piano, and a sweet, plaintive melody came wafted on the air, mingling with the musical night sounds around; and after this, three of the sisters sang a sweet little trio; and then the whole bevy, four in number, came up to their parents for their good-night kiss; and the younger ones submitted to an additional kiss from me, which I didn't dare ask of the two eldest; and then they all tripped off to bed, happy and laughing and chatting—why, somehow, my mind kept running on matrimony, and when I retired to the chamber shown me, I really began to whistle to keep down the uncomfortable tug at my heart. I dreamt that night of rippling waters, and pleasant shores, and low music, and bevies of daughters, and a beautiful wife; and when I awoke, the very first thing was a merry trilling of a young girl's voice under my window, and the air that came through the open sash was so soft and delicious, loaded with riches stolen from the flower beds—and in fact, all these things set me to dressing very abstractedly, and with a dogged sort of determination to make one more visit to New York for the sanguinary purpose of erecting a bon-fire of red tape, cases, briefs, sheep-skin, deeds, titles, law—and washing my hands clean of such defilements forever more, to embrace a life as full and rich, and true and beautiful as this I saw around me.

After dressing down I went for an ante-breakfast ramble. The air was so fine that my spirits went up like a barometer. I plunged through the shrubbery, and into the fields; got drenched with dew (which wasn't quite so comfortable), and so made for the shore, when, finding a little shallop, I put out upon the lake. The paddle was weak, and snapped in two; the boat was leaky, and began to fill. I put back as fast as I could, but paddling with a broken oar was slow work, and I was obliged to stop occasionally, and take to bailing with my hands. When within jumping distance to the shore, I tried the leap, and landed with both feet immersed to the boot tops.

These little mishaps dampened my spirits somewhat, but the recounting of them at the breakfast table afforded so much amusement to the whole family, that it began to dawn upon me that it really was, if I only knew it, first rate sport.

After breakfast, took pole and line, and went fishing, but caught no fish. Discovering that angling was an absurd employment, I abandoned my piscatorial implements, and went gaming, but shot no game. A little discouraged, I set out for a ramble, and this time succeeded—in getting lost. Forty times I was sure that the gables I saw through the opening foliage, belonged to the house of my friend; forty times I was unaccountably mistaken. At last I came upon a little, narrow, romantic stream. This, said I, empties into the lake. If I follow, it will lead me in the proper direction. I did so, but in the immensity of my wisdom, went up stream, instead of down. It *did* occur to me that the stream got narrower and shallower, but these facts I



attributed to the eccentricity of little streams in that locality. It will widen presently, said I, and I shall come out upon the lake unexpectedly. But it didn't. Indeed it got so narrow, and wild, and full of cascades and rapids, that I stood still in my perplexity—until suddenly it burst upon me in a flood of light, that the cascades were falling the wrong way! The astonishment which this discovery caused me is beyond description. Is it possible, thought I, that I have been so stupid as to come up stream? I had better, so my cogitation continued, go back to New York at once. It is very evident that I don't know anything about woodcraft or stream-craft. It would be well for me not to confess this blunder. I should never hear the end of it. I think, hereafter, that I will stick to law. It is all I am fit for.

After duly upbraiding myself in this fashion, I resolved to strike across the country to the first house I met, and there learn my whereabouts, and obtain a guide if possible. I put my resolve into effect. After an hour's walk, I saw a lovely little cottage, nestling amid trees and shrubbery and flowers. I got around to approach it properly in front. As I turned around a small hill, into the green by-lane which came up to the house, quite a pleasant little picture presented itself—consisting of a horse, and a boy, and two dogs, assembled together by a little thatched out-house of the cottage. The horse was saddled for a lady, and one of the dogs was unmistakably a lady's pet. I stood looking at the group, for law experience had not quite destroyed a once quick sense of the picturesque, when out from the cottage and across the lawn, there came tripping one of the most exquisite creatures I ever saw—blooming and radiant, with floating curls from under a country sunhood, and a rustic, simple sort of dress—evidently designed for a free scamper through by-paths, and unfrequented lanes. She ran up to the horse with a merry laugh, patted him affectionately upon the neck (how I envied him!) jumped upon a horse block at hand and before I could fairly see how it was done, she was mounted, and her reins gathered up. The horse was a fine, plump, beautifully made creature, such a one as Landseer would have liked to paint—full of spirit, and proud of his burthen. As he felt her weight upon his back, his ears pricked up, his eye lighted, and his whole figure grew animated. His rider, with a merry word to the boy, turned his head in my direction, and was about putting him to the gallop, when, for the first time she saw me. She involuntarily drew in the reins, blushed, and then would have passed on; had not I lifted my hat, and with an apology, begged to be informed of the proper direction to Mr. Woodward's house.

"Mr. Woodward's," said as musical a voice as ever I want to hear; "dear me! Why, it's full five miles."

"Is it possible?" said I, determined to prolong the interview; "I am a sojourner at Mr. Woodward's—"

"Mr. Jackson?" interrupted she, with an interrogative bow.

I fairly stared. She knew my name. Who could she be?

"Pardon me, you are right, but you have so much the advantage of me——"

"Oh, I am a frequent visitor at Mr. Woodward's. I like them all so much. But you have lost your way, I think, and I am riding very near to Mr. Woodward's. Won't you rest in the cottage until they send a carriage for you?"

"Pardon me, miss——" I paused with the hope she would fill up the blank, but she took no notice of my attempt to draw out her name, and I was compelled, awkwardly enough, to resume. "I will not trouble you so much," said I, "I am not fatigued, and once upon the proper road, I shall reach my destination easily enough."

"Oh, sir, then follow this road to the right. It will lead you directly to Mr. Woodward's house," and touching her horse slightly with her reins, gallopped off, leaving me uncovered and staring after her.

Here was an adventure! Something delightful and romantic. Who could she be? Addressing me as Mr. Jackson, too. There was one comfort—I was quite certain of meeting her again. This fact I hugged to my heart. And was there ever anybody so beautiful, with such eyes, such lips, such roses, and such a figure! My heart was fairly cleft in twain. I could only think of the vision I had met. I could do nothing but recall her words. I walked on air. There was nectar in my veins. I planned it all. I was to grow more and more in love, and inspire her with the flame; my visit would be prolonged, and every hour was to be passed in her glorious presence. My rapture would be beyond belief. Then I would propose, and receive that trembling, *Yes;* then I would taste the unspeakable sweetness of her lips; then our moonlight walks, our sails upon the lake, our forest rambles; then—then I tripped over a vine, and pitched sprawling into the dust!

"Confound it!" said I, scrambling to my feet and limping away, "just my luck." I brushed the dust from my clothes with the air of an injured man, and resumed my journey, planting each step firmly upon the ground, and with unaccountable suddenness feeling a disgust for damp moonlight walks, and such romantic fol de rol.

By the time I reached my friends my spirits were up again, however, and at tea I gave them all a glowing account of my adventure.

"It must have been Alice Clare," said Mary Woodward. I was delighted. Alice Clare sounded deliciously. I had vaguely apprehended that it might be Brown. Alice Clare was certainly a pretty name. I kept repeating Alice Clare to myself continually. Later in the evening, when we were all on the piazza, I got a little drowsy (dreaming of Alice Clare all the while), and somebody whispered a sudden word in my ear. I sprang to my feet, shouting out her name at the top of my voice, to the astonishment of everybody. In an instant I became aware of what I had done, and sat down hastily, feeling, and no doubt looking, excessively foolish.

"You mustn't fall in love with Alice Clare," said Mr. Woodward, good-humoredly. "She is——"

"Oh, papa," broke in Mary, laughing and running up to Mr. Woodward, "don't say anything, please don't."

And then beckoning to her sister, off she scampered, laughing gleefully all the while. I felt uncomfortably certain that all their laughter was at me, but as they returned presently, looking very demure, I soon forgot all about it.

The next day, Alice Clare came gallopping up to the house—upon this occasion her fine form superbly set off in a riding-habit, and her thick curls gathered up under a dashing, jauntily-disposed riding-hat. When she entered the house, and Mary was about presenting me to her, I distinctly saw an exchange of signals between them. I wondered what it meant, and then wisely recollecting how proverbially young girls are full of secrets that are no secrets, magnanimously overlooked it,

"Alice, Mr. Jackson?" said Mary, demurely.

I bowed. I have a very perfect bow, I am sure. Yet when I lifted my head, the tittering which both Miss Clare and Miss Woodward were endeavoring to suppress, surprised me. I saw no good cause for it.

The interview was quite a lively and spirited one, but it threatened to be fearfully short, until my proposal to return with her, after a moment's hesitation, was accepted. Mr. Woodward ordered a horse saddled for me, and in less than half an hour we rode away together. It was delightful, this riding through shady lanes by the side of this exquisite creature. My heart beat; my blood tingled; my head swam around.

I determined to make an impression. I opened the conversation in an exceedingly brilliant manner. I said a great many very original and striking things; I remarked that I never knew a more lovely evening; that I should think the sun to be an hour high; that the lake was a very pretty lake; that a scamper over the heath, like the one we were enjoying, was a great treat to a New Yorker (here my horse shied, and I lost my stirrup); that fishing was the pursuit of a philosopher; that I wondered she didn't come to New York, where her charms would be appreciated; did she like music? who could help liking music? was she fond of poetry? Did she prefer Byron or Moore? Wasn't Tennyson exquisite?—and so on for a mortal hour. She said many sweet things in reply, and bade me good evening when I left, with the most entrancing smile I ever saw or smarted under.

It is wonderful how an acquaintance ripens in the country. What with rides, sails, pic-nics with the Woodwards to one of the Lake Islands, walks, &c., I knew Alice Clare as well in three days as I would have done in half a year in town.

I was most indefatigable in my attempts to please. I gathered bouquets for her every morning, and rode over to present them; I composed a sonnet to her beauty; I whispered in her ear the finest compliments I could frame; I evinced in every possible way my admiration of her person and her qualifications. I did not quite like the *feu de joie* of glances that was continually let off both by her and her friend Mary, nor the grave surprise with which my conduct was watched by Mr. Woodward, but these things only gave me occasional uneasiness. "It's all right," said I, "the loveliest of her sex shall be the future Mrs. Jackson."

The term of my vacation was drawing to its close. It was necessary that I should hasten matters. I resolved to—not exactly learn my fate, because my confidence in the way it would all end was never shaken by a doubt—but I resolved to explain myself the first opportunity, and settle the preliminaries.

The next day she rode over as usual to Mr. Woodward's, and I offered to accompany her back. No sooner were we started than I determined at once to break the ice, and open the subject. I found it more difficult than I supposed. The words stuck in my throat. I hemmed and hawed, grew embarrassed, silent, fidgety, perspiring, trembling, and nervous. We rode on a mile or two without speaking. Alice kept her head averted. This I considered a good sign. She was embarrassed, too—blushing to her brows, no doubt. At last I urged my horse close up to hers, and stammered out—

"Miss Alice——"

There was a moment's pause. Hero (this was the name of Alice's horse), as if jealous of me, began to mend his pace. I pushed up my steed to his side, and repeated again, in a low voice, agitated and trembling in spite of me—

"Miss Alice—I—I——"

Hero shot ahead a little. I urged my own nag forward. Hero only went the faster. I was half a length behind him.

"Miss Alice," repeated I, somewhat louder, "I desire, Miss Alice, I wish—that is, I trust——"

Hero broke out into a gallop. I struck forward at the same pace, but in spite of me nearly a length behind. It was getting deucedly awkward.

"I wish, Miss Clare," resumed I, "to confess to you, to unfold to you, to offer——"

Hero began to stretch out in long leaps. My nag was an ambitious creature, but rather short-winded. He didn't like this apparent attempt to leave his company, and giving his head an ugly shake, began to try his best.

"Miss Clare," said I, as I got up close to her side again, "Miss Clare, I love—I offer——"

Hero began to gallop at a furious rate. I urged my own horse forward with whip and heel. We were going over the ground like mad. My hat blew off. I was an uncertain horseman, and thought I should be bounced out of the saddle. I grasped the mane with all my might.

"Miss Clare—I off—off—fer——" stammered I, still holding pertinaciously to my one idea, although gasping, bewildered, blinded, my stirrups lost, and nearly shaken out of my seat.

"Alice—Miss Clare—dear Alice," I still kept crying out, although now a dozen feet behind her. My horse was winded, and began to lose his ground. Alice shot ahead like an arrow, never deigning to give me one look. A turning of the road took her out of sight. A few minutes more, and my horse was broken down altogether, and abruptly stopped. I ground my teeth together, and even let out an oath. I berated my broken-winded steed with every epithet I could think of. In fact, I worked myself up into a tremendous passion. But, I didn't mean to give the matter up. I rode back and found my hat, and then deliberately pursued my way to Alice's cottage.

As I rode up I saw a horse, not Hero, dusty and travel-stained, standing by the gate. A visitor, thought I impatiently, and I shall fail to find an opportunity after all. However, I rode up, dismounted, and entered.

Alice was there, her riding-habit already removed. A stranger was present—a tall, fine-looking man of not more than twenty-five.

Both rose as I entered.

"Mr. Jackson, permit me," said Alice, with an arch smile and a mischievous glance, "Mr. Clare—my husband!"

I turned white, then red; I sat down, and stood up; I stared, stammered, and wondered if there was a way to vanish through the floor—and at last seized my hat, rushed out, and made my way off as fast as possible.

Within two hours, I was on my way to New York.

I found out all about it afterwards. Mary, the mischievous puss, seeing that I was struck with Alice, and inasmuch as Mr. Clare was absent, planned a little sport at my expense—which Alice was very willing to join her in.

Reader, let me give you two pieces of advice:

Be sure the lady you fall in love with hasn't a husband already.

Never pop the question on horseback.

MAUD, THE SORCERESS.

Continued from page 165 of present number.

"It was so sweet, dear Eva, so sweet and precious to catch it, like an echo, in the faltering voice, and seize it like a light retreating in the timid eye—it was so sweet to be the sole keeper of its secret life, that I have not dared to break this sacred spell, fearful lest in breathing over it I should dissolve it."

Eva made an impatient movement. "What nonsense!" she exclaimed almost pettishly.

"You think so!" cried Paul, delighted. He mistook her expression for one of annoyance at the long term of silence which his timid poetry had imposed on them. He kissed her hand, and she left it in his, smiling. This further tended to deceive him. "Listen, Eva," he continued: "I have lived for years in a dream of most exquisite beauty. Ever near me was a spirit of grace and truth—a spirit of poetry, of love and loveliness, which I sometimes used to hope might be realized in life, and more often used to fear might lure me away from all realities of happiness for love of this mocking fancy of a heated brain. But I have seen you, and now I know that my dream was more a prophecy than a vision. I have foreshadowed you in my guardian angel. From henceforth let the shadow fade, and the substance come forth into the sunlight! Eva, Eva, I love you! Oh, tell me with your voice, as you have told me with your eyes, that you love me!" He waited for a reply, but the girl was silent. He could not yet read that false fair face, nor decipher the crimson letters of crime.

"You have shocked me, Paul," she then said very slowly, and her words fell like ice on the boy's bounding heart; "and pained me, too. You have deceived yourself, and wronged me. You say I showed you love! No; I showed you only friendship. I cannot love you, for I am not fit to do so. Silly boy!" she added with her musical laugh, laying her hand on his head, and bending down till her young lips almost touched his forehead; "silly child! did you not know that I was to be married next month?"

The words had hardly left her lips when she would have given much to have recalled them; for, without a cry, a groan, a sigh, with nothing but a wild look in his eyes, and a sudden starting to his feet, poor Paul fell back on the mossy bank, stiff and rigid as one dead. At that moment, Eva heard the voices of her lover and brother borne down the river; and rushing through the wood, and over the cowslip meadow, she gained the Hall before they returned, Paul still lying more than half-dead by the water's edge.

That evening, Eva was so gay and graceful, so prettily saucy to her betrothed, so flushed with youth and beauty, that young Mr. Rollestone congratulated himself again on his return home, on possessing the best bred-hunter, and the prettiest wife—to come—in the whole county, and swore he was a lucky fellow; but as lucky was Eva Gray, too, for that matter; for the squire of Oakenden West owned as long a rent-roll and as grand a genealogical tree as the squire of Oakenden.

And while the young man was balancing thus his account with love, a lifeless form floated down the wandering river, and the moon-lighted waves rocked round a pale face cradled on them—poor Paul, in his first fit of despair, rushing to death for love of a false heart.

In one hand, clasped on his heart, Paul held a lock of golden hair, stolen—sweet theft!—one evening on the Hall terrace, when the three young people, he and Eva and Horace—sat looking at the stars, and weaving out the fabric of their future lives from the clouds; and wild-flowers, crushed and broken, were clenched in the other hand.

But an unseen and an unknown Providence watched

Paul. When the low wind sighed among the reeds, in another moment to sound the death-dirge of the hapless boy, the gipsy Maud rushed through the wood, and plunging into the river, caught the drowning youth. She drew him to shore, and placed him on the grass; she laid his head on her lap, and wrung his dark chestnut hair; she chafed his hands, and warmed his heart beneath her own: and she breathed back into his lips the sacred gift of life. A sigh, a convulsive start, a shudder that ran from head to heel, and Paul opened his eyes to fix them on the dusky face that looked down on his, tending him faithfully—a dusky face, set round with jet-black hair, with eyes that told plainly enough what was her outcast lineage—her Bohemian race—yet tender, loving, mild, and pure as the face of an angel—a face that one would have prayed for to be one's comforter in illness, and to whose mercy the fondest mother would have given up her children.

"Maud, Maud!" sobbed Paul, "oh, you do not know how my heart is broken!" He turned his weary head in her lap, and buried it like a child in her gown, weeping passionately. All the nerve and sinew of his manhood had gone; and as he lay there, Maud felt more like the mother of some grieving child than the sister of a sorrowing man; yet this maternal instinct made her more indulgent and more kind.

"Hush!" she said; "I know all."

"No, no, Maud! you cannot know all; no one but myself can really know what a fearful game of cruelty and deception has been played against me—played against a heart of love, Maud, whose only fault was its trust. Oh, you cannot know all!"

"Yes, Paul; for I have been with you through every hour of this day of agony. I watched you through the wood; I tracked you silently, and followed your footsteps faithfully and patiently, knowing that a time would come when I should be useful to you. And now, I tell you, knowing all, that you must be brave, my friend, and patient."

"Brave! patient! Maud, these are only words!"

"Something more than that, Paul. Look up, boy, into the sky above—are there no truths there, no joys in knowledge and in religion, that you should fling away your life for the heartless words of a mocking girl? Has nature no stores of healing even for a love betrayed? learning no harbors of refuge even for a heart wrecked? You have not lost all in losing even Eva, beautiful as she is. No life has but one venture, and that a wreck, while a star shines above the clouds, or a flower blossoms on the sands; or while one human heart lies stricken with sorrows which human sympathy can soften; one throbbing head lies low with disease, which human hands can soothe. While there is a secret of nature to learn, or a kindly office to fulfill, no one can say: 'My anguish is incurable.' Do these words sound cold and hard now, my boy? You will find them true when this storm has passed by."

"Cold and hard!" groaned Paul; "they are stones instead of bread—death instead of life."

Maud made no answer. She lifted his head on her lap, and laid it on her bosom; and once, and once only, her tears fell on the boy's forehead and mingled with his own.

Days and days Maud sat by the fever-bed of her friend, his life hanging by a thread, and the grim gates of death swung back to receive him; but Maud had been taught some rare secrets of nature: and magic potions, brewed under strict conditions of the moon and the compass, with holy prayers repeated reverently over them, and charms and spells—muttered spells of the whispering voice, and shadowy spells of the waving hand, love and watchfulness—these restored Paul; and Maud was rewarded by his recovery.

One day the rattle of carriages past Paul's casement, and the loud ringing of the Oakenden bells, brought a sudden fit of anguish—such as Maud had never seen since the first wrenching away of his hopes by Eva's cruel words. "What is that, Maud?" he asked; his lips quivering, and his nervous hand clutching at the empty air. Maud changed color. "O Maud! do you not deceive me too!" cried the poor boy.

"No, Paul, I will not deceive you."

"Then speak: quick—quick!"

"There are things sometimes best left unspoken, Paul," she said tenderly.

"No, no, Maud! the truth always."

"At its right time, dear boy."

"Now, now, Maud!" The bells rang louder, the village children screamed and laughed, and the horses pranced and neighed. All this tumult was borne on the morning air into the sick-chamber. "Tell me, Maud."

"It is a marriage, my friend."

"A marriage!"—he spoke with a kind of calm despair—"whose?" She did not answer. "Whose?" he cried, seizing her arm. His eyes were wild, and his voice almost fierce; his gesture was fierce as well.

"One you know of, Paul."

"Her name?"

"Why do you ask it? You know as well as I that Eva's marriage-bells are ringing!"

"Eva! Eva!" shrieked the boy; and then he fell back, the blood flowing over his lip, and his whole body racked by strong convulsions.

When Maud wiped the blood from his lips, Eva, in another scene, placed her hand in that of Charles Rollestone, and said, in her calm sweet voice, "I will," when Dr. Mathison asked her, according to the formula, if she would have him for her husband. But not once that day did Eva remember the youth she had so betrayed; not once, in her wedding glory, came the faintest glow of feeling for him; not the shadow of sympathy, of pity, or regret.

The agitation of this new trial brought back all Paul's fever, and for many days and weeks he was again on the threshold of the grave. But Maud snatched him from this new danger, as she had preserved him from the first, and once more restored him to his art and life.

All Oakenden was in arms. It was thought a very bold thing on Maud's part, that she should have nursed Paul Desprez through an illness. But Maud let them talk as they would, and went on tending and caring for poor Paul, just as if there was no world in Oakenden to criticise and malign.

Maud's great amusement had been—although it was a foolish one—to encourage in Oakenden the idea of her witchcraft. Many a thing which had gained her her questionable reputation, had been done out of the love of fun and mischief, rather than inadvertently; although she never expected the large amount of sorrow which befell her as a consequence of this reputation. She trusted more to the goodness than she feared the folly of men, and never thought it possible that human hearts should be closed because social prejudices were shocked. The gipsy Maud knew more of botany and entomology than she did of English society or English ideas. If she had had more of what the world calls common sense, she would have never placed herself in such a false position; but then, if the people at Oakenden had had more discernment than prejudice, they would have understood her better, and would not have transformed dissimilarity into crime.

After all, her escapades were not very heinous. She used to dress in a singular manner—her gowns made, as they said, like pictures; then she used to go out at night, because she had sundry ideas of hours and positions in the gathering of her herbs and simples; and then she used to say odd out-of-the-way things when they teased her, and used to look awful, and mutter threats, and endeavor to indemnify herself by their terror for the cruelty of her tormentors; and then she lived alone in the haunted Hollow, and was afraid of nothing; and, chief of all, she was more clever than any of the Oakenden people; and this was the list of poor Maud's misdoings!

Poor Maud! At first, she was merely amused at seeing the terror in which she was held; but when she found that every heart was cold, and every door closed against her, she acknowledged the mistake she had made, and would sometimes, when not very willful, have undone the past if possible. But she trusted to the power of time; and went on, doing her kindly duties diligently. If a neighbor's child fell sick, Maud would spare herself no trouble—she would sit up at night with the poor mother, or to give her some hours of rest, while she nursed the little one; she would think nothing of miles and hours if she could but find some rare herb on the moor which would do the sufferer good. If any one was wanted, Maud would be the messenger, and as she went more swiftly than any one else, the country people used to accept the convenience and vilify the mode, always believing that she went on her errands of Christian charity in some most unchristian fashion. Yet still she was not appreciated nor understood; and her life had grown into a wild loneliness, wherein her love, sown broadcast as it might be, was all cast back, harvestless, on herself.

It may easily be imagined, then, what, under such conditions, Paul became to Maud. She used to be startled herself, sometimes, at the happiness she had centred on him, and ask herself, and wonder, what he would do with a love he perhaps neither knew of nor returned. And yet she used to fancy he loved her. It was not that his manners were in anything what they had been to Eva; they were neither passionate nor poetic; neither absorbed nor excited. But they were so intensely calm, with such an atmosphere of peace and repose about them when Maud was there, that she could not fail to see the change. If she left the room, he was restless, sad, uneasy; when she returned, he was like a nursing child restored to its mother. He would sleep sometimes for hours when she was sitting by him, not for an instant if she was away. And when he grew stronger, they used to sit by the casement, talking for long hours together over deeper things than mere youthful sentiment, over thoughts, and feelings, and aspirations that made the life of both. He was always so attentive to what she said, so respectful, so docile—that noble kind of manly docility which is so sweet a thing, and so purifying for women to receive. And he used to adopt her opinions one by one, fighting hard sometimes, and sometimes yielding suddenly, till she laughed and called him her pupil, and said she would make something grand of him at last. And Maud, who was no self-deceiver, and would rather have heard the bitterest truth than lived in the most enchanting falsehood, pondered over all these things diligently, asking herself whether they meant a sick man's gratitude, or a strong man's love. But she never received a clear response from either her hopes or her fears, so she was fain to leave to time the unloosing of her life's problem.

When Eva heard of Maud's care for Paul, and how all the world said they were to be married as soon as the artist was sufficiently strong to be carried to church for they all declared he was bewitched—she put on an incredulous look, and said abruptly: "Paul Desprez marry Maud of the Hollow? he has stooped low after soaring high!"

Paul was weak and faint yet, and to sit in the autumn sunsets was all he could do; with purple grapes, the rich red leaves overshadowing them, and the golden bloom of apricots beside him.

"How is it, Maud, that I did not think you beautiful?" asked Paul suddenly one day.

"Because I am not beautiful," answered Maud calmly. But she felt the blood come in her cheek, and another light than the one now in it, steal into her eye.

"Is that modesty or affectation, Maud?" Paul asked laughingly.

"Neither, my friend."

"It must be. You are beautiful."

"Do you think so? I am deformed." Though this last speech was said very quietly, a bystander would have seen from the quivering lip and the sudden straining of the nerves how much it cost Maud to make that confession.

"No, no!" exclaimed Paul, vehemently. "I cannot believe it!"

The gipsy smiled. "You saw it once, I believe, my boy. When you first knew me, you were aware of it. Was it not so?"

"Oh," he answered impatiently, "I was all blind then, and knew nothing! But I do not see it now, and I do not believe in it. And why libel yourself, Maud, when you would not libel another? Why tell a falsehood, even for modesty?"

"It is the truth, Paul."

"No, no!"

"You shall judge, then, for yourself." She stood up before him and the slanting shadow on the ground, elongated and exaggerated, showed an evident deformity. "I grant this is an exaggeration," she then said, quietly reseating herself—"but it is an exaggeration of the truth only; it is not a falsehood."

"Why did you tell me this?" cried Paul, mournfully. "I had begun to believe you beautiful, and I was so happy in that belief!" He spoke as if something had had been taken from him.

"Child in mind yet!" said Maud inwardly, caressing his hair; "and yet how women love the very men they accuse of childishness! And shall I cease to be your friend," she said aloud, "because I carry a little more flesh on my right shoulder than on my left? If you value me at all, is it for anything but my heart and mind? If not for these, then for what? You would not surely that I should trust to the sincerity of a friendship sown on the shifting sands of a fair skin and symmetrical form? If so, a fever caught by the bedside of a dying mother, or a fall from a height when protecting a wandering child, would destroy it without hope. No, Paul, friendship must be built on surer foundations than these."

"And yet how sweet it is to honor and to admire one's friend!"

"That may be: honor and admiration for what is true and worthy in the eye of Heaven, rather than in the code of man."

"And you, Maud?"

"And I, my boy, am less before man than, in all humility, I would much pray to be, before Heaven. See me as I am," she added, suddenly taking a far different tone, standing and speaking with strength and decision. "What am I?—a gipsy, deformed, an outcast by race; believed to be worse than human, the dwarf-witch of the Hollow; denied the cares given to other women: denied by some that I am even a woman—for do they not call me gnome, witch, elf? And when you have fairly understood what I am, and what I seem, then call me friend if you will, and hold my hand in yours——"

"But, Maud, you are my friend now," interrupted Paul.

She put up her hand. "Do not deceive yourself," she said. "Make no ideal of my swarthy face because it has bent over you lovingly in your sickness; and believe me no angel because my foot stole round your feverish bed tenderly. Do not confound gratitude with that spontaneous affection which calls out a friend from the large herd of humanity, and singles him alone of hundreds. If you do, you will but prepare your own disenchantment and discomfiture, and my unending sorrow. Come, let us go in; the dews are falling, and your cheek is pale. You look tired, and must rest."

Paul did not answer; nor that day, nor the next, nor the next again, did he refer to the subject. But he was much lost in thought, and sat often watching Maud stealthily, when he thought she did not see him; and then he would lean back in his chair, and close his eyes, and remain there, absorbed in some deep reflections, perhaps for many hours.

"Maud, you loved Horace once in your life?" They were sitting in the doorway, the feathers of the clematis round them.

"No, never!" There was a pause

"But when I first came to Oakenden, you seemed to me to love him," returned Paul, dissatisfied.

"You mistook," Maud answered simply; and she continued her task, stringing great gold beads into a necklace. After a time, she added: "I could never love what I did not esteem. Horace is to me but a glorious case enclosing a worthless jewel. I thought him beautiful always—as, indeed, who would not? But I loved him never, because I found no resting-place for my soul in his heart or mind. They are both too shallow in their own feelings to deserve the truth of any one's affection. I to love Horace would have been as far misplaced as you, Paul"—and she laid her hand on his —"to love Eva."

"I am cured now, Maud," said Paul, and he took her hand in his. A glory shone in the depths of Maud's downcast eyes. "Yet, tell me," he added, "do you think you could ever love one who had erred so far as to mistake the false for the true, and had given to mere physical symmetry the worship due to moral virtue? Can you forgive me, and do you think you could love me?"

Maud did not raise her head; tears hung on her long black lashes, and she trembled. "Think!" she answered, almost below her breath—"a gipsy, of evil fame in your own society, without one recommendation such as English manners require! Think again, Paul. You, an artist, to marry with physical deformity!"

"Ah, Maud, then you do not love me!"

"Not love you!" she answered passionately, raising her eyes and standing up: "I loved you from the first day we talked together in the moonlight by the willow-trees. I had my lap filled with herbs, and you laughed at me first, but you listened to me afterwards; and then I knew what a great gift Heaven had thrown in my way; then I acknowledged in you all my soul had ever longed for—my realization of truth and goodness; yet I never dreamed of your love, for I knew that you loved Eva. Not love you! Then I do not love the very well-springs of my life!"

That night Paul closed his journal. He wrote the last words in it as the night passed into the morning hours: "To-day I have found my Egeria!"

"And now, Paul, that I know you love me for myself alone, and have cared more for my nature, the reality of my character, than for conventional appearances, I will tell you such parts of my history as will interest you, and perhaps please you." And Maud drew her arm through her lover's, clasping her hands together.

"I am a gipsy—that is too evident to be denied," she said laughing; "but I am also the daughter of a Spanish nobleman. My mother, who was wonderfully beautiful—my dear mother! how well I can remember her when I was very young, and she in all the pride of her glorious loveliness!—well, she ran away from her tribe, with a young Spaniard, wild, warm, and reckless, who married her because she had fine eyes—they were like stars—silky hair, and a clear voice. I have all the marriage-papers here," she added, showing an ivory box bound and barred with gold. "You know that the true gipsies are not allowed to marry out of their tribe, and you know that the Spanish grandee must marry also with his caste, if he wishes to keep its favor or recognition. On both sides, therefore, this marriage incurred the undying reprobation of two most different worlds; and both my father and mother had to begin new lives, strange and irksome—the restraint to her, and the simplicity to him, so unlike all they had ever been accustomed to, rendering existence almost intolerable. They came to England—my father to escape from the jealous pride of his kinsmen, my mother from the fury of her people. And here I was born, which is the reason of my Saxon name, given me out of gratitude to a young nurse, Maud, who attended my mother in her travail. But after a few years, my father died in a rapid consumption, as rapid almost as a fever. I can just remember the funeral—the hearse and the black feathers, and my mother's veil that shrouded her entirely. My mother had now no tie to civilization. Though disowned by her tribe, and certain of being murdered if she ever fell into their hands, she could not remain longer in the stillness of her hated English life. In the Hungarian forests, among the Spanish mountains, on the wide plains of Italy, and amidst the snows of Russia — often without food, oftener without shelter, my mother and I roamed for many, many years, although she bore about with her gold and jewels—which I have now, Paul—that would have established her among the greatest of the lands where she was treated as a beggar and lived the wild career of one. She taught me all I know. Oh, she was wise, my beautiful mother! She taught me secrets of nature undreamed of in the broad beaten track of popular science; she taught me the stars, and how—Oh, my poor mother!—how they spell out our destiny; and highest of all, she taught me to read the fate stamped on each man's brow, and to spy into the heart through the book of the features; and these were secrets more valuable than cookery or embroidery—although I am not without the knowledge of these either," she added, smiling. "So you see now the reason of my savageness of nature," she continued, caressingly: "it is an inheritance. My poor mother showed her uncivilized blood by restlessness and ceaseless wandering; I mine, by contempt of appearances and a war with conventionalities. And it is from this feeling that I have kept my birth a secret, although it is high enough to satisfy the most exacting. It is this instinct which has made me live without pomp or parade, content to be sufficient to myself, and to let my enemies slander me at their will. I was too much at war by nature with the world to conciliate it by declaring myself. This pride may be foolish, but it has made me strong—strong, Paul, in the strength of truth, and careful for Heaven's favor rather than for man's."

"And you wish still to preserve this secret, my Maud?"

"No," she said softly, and she put her arm round his neck. "I have now more than my own pride to think of, and I have no right to lay my self-made burden on another. No, Paul; you may tell to all the world—all whose social approbation is dear to you—that your gipsy-wife has the royal blood of Spain in her heart; and, what will perhaps sound higher to English ears, that she possesses wealth, that could buy the old Hall, and yet not be exhausted. Maud of the Hollow—Maud the gipsy, who lived in the haunted cottage, and had dealings with Satan—Maud, who has been met on the heath bareheaded in a storm, and barefooted, too, is no dowerless vagrant married out of pity! But let all that pass," she suddenly exclaimed, interrupting herself; "let me be but the cause of your happiness, and I shall be a queen, and happier than one!"

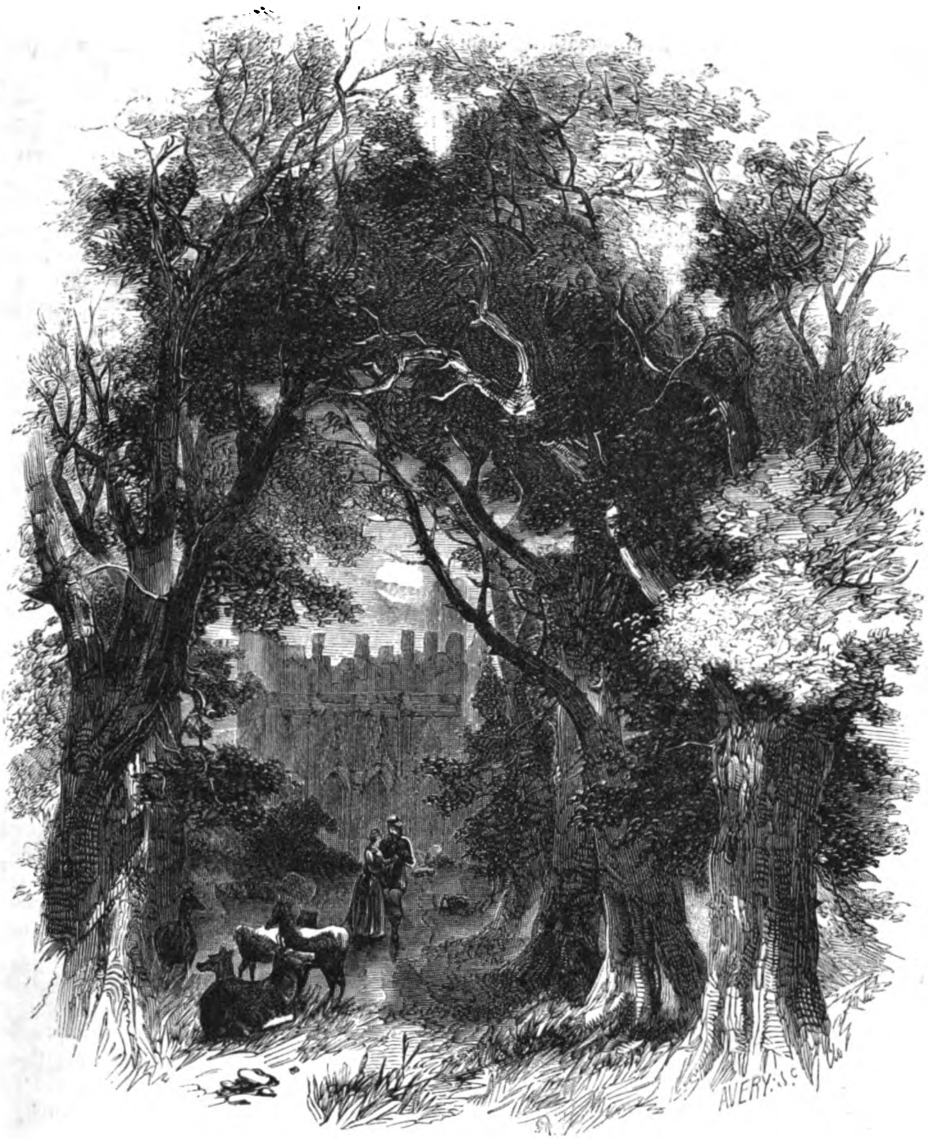
"And you will not, my Maud, when we are married, refuse to be tamed? or shall I wake some morning to find my gipsy-wife wandered away, like the bird-maiden of the Eastern tale?"

"When I am married," she said, "I will be a good English wife, stay at home, love my lord, live in his smile, and—earn it."

"Maud! Egeria! pray for me to become worthy of you; for how far below you I am!"

"We will pray together, Paul, to become worthy of each other, and of the priceless gift of love graciously laid on the hearts of both; for to love truly, one must be worthy. True love never lives in a degraded heart. By love the world was saved, by love the truth is accepted, by love the soul is purified. Let us be worthy of our love, my Paul, and then we shall be faithful to the godlike charge we hold in the hearts of each."

Oakenden was greatly shocked at this marriage. Paul was positively cut for some weeks, and Maud's reputation as a sorceress was confirmed. Paul and Maud were not much disturbed at the small tempest they had raised. They bore it very tranquilly, and forgave all their slanderers; and by degrees and in time those even who had been most bitterly opposed to them became appeased, and the old power of virtue and kindliness was again, as ever, proved in the softening of prejudices and the opening of affection. Maud — the despised dwarf, the dreaded gipsy—the feared witch—at last won herself the esteem she deserved; for her patience, her great-heartedness, affection and knowledge, made themselves felt, as sun-rays through a cloud. And as, after her marriage, she became wise and sensible, and gave up the *rôle* of witchcraft played in her thoughtless maidenhood, the thick intellects of Oakenden were no longer obscured by shadows, and could at last afford to recognize her as she was.



CLIPSTONE CHASE:

A TALE OF ROUNDHEADS AND CAVALIERS.

I.

Never was the heaven of calmer blue, or the earth steeped in sweeter sunshine, than that which lay on the open glades and velvet pastures of Clipstone Chase on a serene Sabbath morning in the summer of 1648. The bells of the village church were ringing out over hill and valley, and, by many a winding path and woodland walk, the humble cotters and the lowly farmers wended their way towards the old grey spire, which stood pointing its silent finger to the sky.

Among those who sauntered carelessly through sun and shade, was old Sir Cuthbert Clipstone, of Clipstone Hall, attended by his beautiful daughter Bertha.

Well did Bertha deserve the name of beautiful. In the large fullness of her dark, and tenderly expressive eyes, in the sweet gentleness which lay about her lips, in the white, smooth, radiant brow, she resembled not a little the picture of the Madonna which overhung the old church altar; and as she entered her rush-strewn pew, and knelt to mutter a silent prayer, the sunlight which streamed through the glass-stained windows, fell upon her brow and head, wreathing them like a halo, rendering the resemblance to the picture of the virgin more than usually striking.

The congregation were soon all assembled. The bell ceased its knolling. The worship began, soon however, to be interrupted by one of those stern disturbances, so common to the period.

The choir had just finished singing the beautiful old psalm of

"When Israel, by the Almighty led,"

when loud, long, clear and deep, came the blast of a bugle, which filled the vaulted aisle with a confusion of deafening echoes, and the breast of every worshipper with terror—for the pastoral valleys of England were dented then by the hoofs of war-horses—the clash of sabres, and the roar of muskets awoke the echoes of many a still green wood, which had never been broken before, but by the bugle-horn of the belted hunter, or the axe of the peaceful woodman. War was on every side, and every man felt that the morrow might bring it to his own door, that an hour might show the flame consuming his homestead, and his heart's blood reddening his fields.

Presently the tramp of horses was heard outside the church—then a deep voice, as if issuing some stern command, which was followed by the march of heavy footsteps, and the clanking of armed heels, and jingling of martial accoutrements, which first filled the porch—then, after the rude slamming of the door, came echoing upon the chancel pavement, while one of the troopers, who seemed to be spokesman, halted before the pulpit, and in that long nasal tone which the Puritan leaders affected, exclaimed, "Misguided and benighted brother, my commands enforce me to compel thee to come down from the fold, where thou hast too long played the false shepherd, and led astray the foolish flock, which, to wit, are here assembled. Thou art not permitted to make any reply, but to quit this place at once, peacefully an thou willest it, but quit it thou must, and that instantly. Barnabas, Matthew, and Barachiah, advance quick, and drag down the false prophet." The last sentences were uttered in fiery haste, compared to the slow puritanic whine with which the trooper commenced speaking. And no sooner was the command given, than three of the troopers he had named, approached the pulpit, and were in the act of ascending, when a rush from some of the congregation caused the pastor to wave his hand and exclaim as he descended, "Not here—not in the house of prayer—not in the temple dedicated to Almighty God, must his children strive together." And while so speaking, he waved back the angry peasants and sturdy farmers as he descended. But no sooner had the foot of the preacher touched the pavement, than the two tall Babes of Grace, Matthew and Barnabas, seized him by the surplice, while Barachiah with the butt-end of his short musket, thrust behind, and with a run which there was no resisting, the worthy pastor found himself outside the porch, and standing panting in the rural churchyard, almost before he knew where he was, or what had happened. So sudden was the ejectment, that the whole congregation were taken by surprise. Sir Cuthbert was amongst the foremost to rush to the rescue of the preacher, and was in the act of drawing his sword on the Parliamentary officer, Lieutenant Whaley, when Bertha placed her hand gently, but firmly, on his arm, as she exclaimed, "Father! dear father! for my sake, speak to the man fairly. What can you do against so many?" With a curse on the crop-eared scoundrel, the old royalist let his sword drop back into the scabbard, and then began to hold angry parley with the Parliamentary officer. Whaley replied that the orders were to take possession of Clipstone Hall, Church and Chase, and hold them until he received further commands from Cromwell, since he, Sir Cuthbert Clipstone, had a fortnight ago given quarter to Colonel Cleveland and a party of Cavaliers, and by so doing, proved himself an enemy to the authority of Parliament, and a partisan of Charles Stuart, known as King Charles; and further, that he, Sir Cuthbert Clipstone, was a prisoner; that the Hall was already in possession of the Parliamenary soldiers, but that they had no wish to place him under any restraint, or in any way molest him, so long as the soldiers were allowed to retain possession peacefully. While the lieutenant, with his sword point on the ground, and hand on the hilt, gravely stated these orders, and how far they were hitherto executed, Bertha glanced around the churchyard, and saw that beside several mounted troopers, whose hands rested on the pistols in their saddle holsters, there were soldiers on foot by the porch and churchyard gates, who had left their war-horses grazing among the peaceful graves, or thrown the bridle-reins carelessly over the old grey monuments—that indeed they were surrounded on all sides, and that submission was simply a matter of necessity, until they could obtain aid from their friends, or it pleased the Parliamentary officers to withdraw their presence from the hamlet and the Hall. These impressions Bertha hurriedly whispered to her choleric father, who was still raving impotently at the troop, and swearing by every oath he could think, that summary vengeance should befall the whole presumptuous, canting, treasonable tribe.

A collision between a part of the Parliamentary troops and the villagers, in the inn-yard of the village, cut short the parley, and drew off Whaley, furiously, vowing destruction and ruin to the whole hamlet if a hair of one of his men were injured.

Sir Cuthbert and his daughter, therefore—followed at a respectful distance by the troopers—returned to the Hall.

As they approached the park-entrance, they saw that the Hall had been taken possession of only by a struggle between the troopers and the retainers of the knight—and that the faithful followers had defended their charge with all the strength, courage, and resolution they could bring to bear. The iron gates of the entrance had been burst open by a petard. A faithful forester, in his green livery, was stretched out lifeless beside the avenue of tall elm trees which went winding up to the Hall, his head severed by a sabre cut. As they drew nearer the Hall, every step revealed fresh signs of the struggle, in the trampled grass, broken branches, and traces of blood.

At every outlet of the ancient building armed sentinels were stationed, while voices came from the open casements proclaiming the riot that was held within. With pallid lip and faltering step the old knight pursued his way, leaning heavier on the beautiful Bertha than he was aware of, while his eyes were dimmed with tears, which he had not the power to check, as he thought how many of his faithful retainers had fallen, whose lives might have been spared had he remained behind.

Quite prepared as he was, through the scenes he had already witnessed, to see the change wrought in the home of his fathers; yet, when he entered, the reality far exceeded all he had imagined. Rioting and drinking he expected to meet, for the troop who had taken possession of the Hall professed as little godliness as any that served under the Parliamentary generals. But a far different scene met his view to what his fancy had pictured; there was neither brawl nor riotous excess in the large wainscoted hall which he and his daughter entered; those scenes were confined to another wing of the spacious mansion; here, the new occupiers seemed so intent upon examining his own private documents, that he entered without being perceived. Nearly every secret recess had been ransacked—old carved oaken bureaus broken open, hidden drawers emptied of documents, charters, and deeds, which with their ancient seals and ribbons affixed, lay piled on the dark massy table, or scattered on the polished oaken floor, amid silver flagons, huge black-letter volumes, and other relics. Sir Cuthbert seeing from the intentness with which these documents were perused, that his being present was not perceived, motioned Bertha to keep stationary within the shadow of the doorway, while they stood unobserved, and heard the following remarks:

"Certes, these account for the place holding out so long—and so, under what we conceived to be only rural produce, and allowed to pass the gates, were item, five barrels of gunpowder—item, one hundred weight of shot—twenty-four slaughtered beeves for the garrison, one hundred muttons, to be left behind the rick-yard; three hundred Jacobuses in gold. Marry, but the old knight spared neither pouch nor powder, cattle nor cunning, to maintain, what he and his call the good old cause. Our informant was right, though he is not a jot the less a knave to betray an old neighbor—right so far, in all he has communicated. He must not be spared, Thurlby."

As the name of Thurlby was spoken, Bertha uttered a sudden cry, and, as pale as death, staggered forward, and would have fallen had not Sir Cuthbert caught her in his arms.

Bertha's sudden cry brought the other occupants to their feet. The young officer addressed by the speaker as Thurlby, sprang forward to assist the old knight to place the now pale and senseless Bertha upon a couch at hand. He was a tall, stalwart youth, of not more than four and twenty summers. His corselet was richly inlaid, and such portions of his dress as were displayed, seemed more befitting a Cavalier, than a leader of the Roundheads.

"I thank you for your attention, sir," said Sir Cuthbert, "but you are one of the last I ever looked for in the ranks of the rebels."

"I am in the performance of my duty," replied the young man calmly.

"Duty!" The color rushed into the old knight's face. "Well, sir," resumed he, "we understand these things differently. I thank you for your aid. My daughter is recovering from her fright, you perceive."

The young man bowed, turned upon his heel, and walked towards one of the windows.

Bertha's tiring-maid, after some moments, was discovered, hid away in a closet half dead with fear, and with her aid the young maiden was led from the room into her own chamber.

II.

By a ruined chapel that stood at the end of a long avenue of trees, Reginald Thurlby and Bertha Clipstone paced to and fro, now in moonlight, now in shade.

"This is kindly done," said Reginald to his companion, "and I care not if the whole world pronounce me a renegade, so long as my name stands unsullied in the estimation of Bertha."

"It does, it is," replied she, her tears falling as she spoke; "but oh, Reginald, the shock was so sudden to find you arrayed on the side of our enemies, that it overcame me. But I now know how ill it would have proved with us this day but for your presence. My father still refuses to listen to me, Reginald. His anger is great. He says that it would have been better for the home of our ancestors to have been levelled to the dust, rather than that one to whom his daughter's troth is plighted—should—should have——"

"It is enough that he is your father," answered he, his cheek reddening as his mind shaped Bertha's unfinished sentence; "many will think as he does. So be it. Yet, Bertha, I feel that I have not done wrong. Is he not unworthy of the name of king who falsifies his word? Tell me, Bertha, am I bound to one who plays fast and loose with me? You know how well I served him—how I gave up all for him. He pledged his royal word that Cleveland's forces should not be withdrawn from your protection—but he broke that royal word. I tell you, Bertha," continued he, pacing up and down in great excitement, "I tell you, that while we have been shedding our blood, and exhausting our patrimony, he, this king, whom we believed to be the soul of honor, has been tampering with the Parliamentary forces—making offers to Fairfax, Cromwell, Ireton, and others, and deceiving us, who have ruined ourselves in his service. I threw my commission at his feet—told him to his face that he had broken faith with me—and rushing from his presence, hurried as fast as horse could speed, to fall single-handed in your protection; to block up with my own body, should there be no other defender, that threshold, over which King Charles had pledged his royal honor that no Roundhead should pass—but I came too late."

"No, not too late," replied Bertha; "but for your presence, much blood would have been shed, and it gives my heart ease to know that you have not taken up arms in behalf of the rebels; for, believe me, Reginald, though the King falsified his word and his oath ten thousand times, it behoves not the honorable soldier to forsake the standard under which he has once enlisted."

"Thou hast but spoken sooth, my beloved Bertha," answered the lover; "my first thought when I came up was to drive a bullet through the brain of the captain of these troopers, but some shot from one or another of his followers would have sent me to my long night's sleep, without having rendered thee that aid which I came to offer. Beside, he but obeyed his general—villain and hypocrite though this colonel is—as we did the commands of the king. The hall must be cleared of these Roundheads, at any cost: the resigning of my commission is already known to the Parliamentary generals, and may stand us in good stead. Some method must be devised to save your father's property from confiscation, and that too, speedily. The Roundheads are but obtaining by power what the king has hitherto got by policy. The one seizes upon the estates of the Cavalier, and appropriates them to their own use, the other obtains them by persuasive appeals, so that we are stripped by both friend and foe, and left only with our naked swords, bare estates, and empty pouches."

"But, surely, his majesty will at last make the concessions which the Parliamentary forces are so clamorous for," said Bertha; "then the land will again sleep in peace."

"It is too late," replied the soldier; "the king has broken his solemn promises too many times ever to be trusted again. Those who humbly entreated, with bowed heads, now draw themselves up haughtily and despise him. Dishonorably though the king has acted, in breaking his pledge, to me, yet I hate these canting psalm-singing, crop-haired hypocrites! The greater bulk are made up of such knaves as Thrapstone, who has now the command of the troops at the Hall. I would give a few of the best of my remaining acres, an he and I were alone in the Chase, with a few feet of clear greensward for a stage, and only his drawn sword between us. It was well for him that he had half-a-dozen stout troopers at his elbow, when he commenced ransacking your father's drawers and cupboards this morning; even after I interceded, and he promised that the documents should only be examined as a mere form, the smooth-tongued sniveller commenced taking notes of every paper that passed through his hands; and, worse than all, every now and then apprised me of their contents, as if in confidence—as if because I had chosen to resent the king's breach of faith, I had become one of the groaning, praying, cut-throat house-robbers, who, while they hum a psalm, despoil the fatherless and the widow to support their cursed cause."

So loud were the tones in which the young Cavalier spoke, and such a jingling did his weapons and armor make, as in his excitement he paced to and fro, that he heard not the sound of approaching footsteps behind the trees; nor was he aware that he had any other listener but Bertha, until the tall grave Roundhead, Colonel Thrapstone, stepped forward and exclaimed, "I knew, young man, that the leopard could as soon change its spots, and the lion browse beside the beeves, as thou and thine ever mingle peaceably with our people. I am not deceived. Many and great are the allowances I could make for the influence of this fair and comely damsel, knowing thy yearning towards her; and some little hope had I that, having found out the falsehood of the man, Charles Stuart, who is but an unsound vessel, a cracked cymbal, that thou wouldst at least have dealt fairly and openly in our cause, and declared thyself either for or against us. When I met thee by the waters this morning, I asked thee not whether thou wert an Ephraimite. I said not unto thee say Shibboleth, for knowing how this man, whom all bowed to a little while ago as king, when it is written, that thou shalt not bow down to anything on earth beneath—knowing he had spurned thee with his foot—I did think that thou wouldst have dealt fairly with me, and not have entered the fold in sheep's clothing. But lo! thou standest a wolf confessed: out of thine own mouth do I condemn thee. Thou hast come as a spy, and thy punishment will be death." He raised his arm in the moonlight as he ceased speaking, and six troopers, led by Lieutenant Whaley, stepped up. The young officer knew too well the nature of the men into whose power he had fallen, to throw away his life wantonly against such odds, and mentally quoting, "There is no armor against fate," was in the act of marching off a prisoner, guarded by the troopers, when Thrapstone said, "Thou hast had thy wish; thou hast met me in the Chase, and I hope hast found the greensward all that thou wishest."

"Coward!" exclaimed Reginald, furiously, darting upon him so suddenly, that the soldiers were unprepared for the movement, and felling the tall colonel with his clenched fist, "I would give the whole of this round island, an it were mine, an I had my wish. But thou never yet hadst the courage to meet a fair foe single-handed; thou hast always had cunning enough to creep into the council, and caution enough to keep out of the battle-field. I know, and I despise thee." But the words were lost to the ear of the prostrate colonel. The blow had left him senseless, and a grim smile passed over the lieutenant's countenance, who was a brave soldier, as he looked on the fallen boaster towards whom he bore no love.

The lieutenant left two of his men to attend to the colonel, then led the way to the hall, with Thurlby a prisoner, yet allowing him to walk with Bertha, adding, with a gruff courtesy, "Neither I nor my men have any wish to overhear your conversation, captain, with the fair lady; but if you attempt to escape, I have given orders to shoot you dead:" saying which, he fell back several paces, and commanded those who marched in advance to just keep within range of their fire-arms, and so left the lovers at liberty to converse without fear of being overheard. Thurlby thanked him for this attention.

III.

At the period of our story, almost every castle and manor-house had its guard-house or prison. Into the strong-room which served this purpose in Clipstone Hall, Thurlby was thrust with little ceremony, and a double guard stationed at the door.

When Sir Cuthbert heard of Reginald's imprisonment, he felt how grievously he had wronged the young Cavalier in suspecting his loyalty, or in doubting for a moment that he had any other motive beyond that of serving himself and his daughter, while appearing to be on friendly terms with the puritanical colonel. Sir Cuthbert endeavored in vain to gain admission to the prison, and apologize for the words he had uttered and the coldness of his manners; but the stern Roundhead, who stood guard, refused to open the door without an order from Colonel Thrapstone or Lieutenant Whaley; and he well knew that he was not likely to obtain it from the former, smarting as he was under the blow he had received from the prisoner. Thrapstone had resolved, as he walked from the ruined chapel, that Thurlby should be tried on the morrow as a spy before the military tribunal which he had the power to summon, and at which he himself would sit as judge; and that he would then sentence him to be shot, irregular though the trial might be. He thought his limited garrison, situation, and the fact of the prisoner having really come to the rescue of Sir Cuthbert, would satisfy any qualms that Cromwell, or any other general, might have about the matter; and if not, he should anyhow have gratified his revenge.

When Whaley came in to receive final orders for the night, he found the colonel with a flask of wine before him on the table. The hypocrite apologized for having the flask before him, on account of the faintness from loss of blood by the blow struck by the "cowardly Cavalier."

"He is no coward," replied the blunt lieutenant, filling a goblet of wine and tossing it off; "if the Royalists had had a few more such swords at Marston Moor, a different tale might have been told."

"Not while we had the Lord of Hosts on our side," whined the puritanical leader in reply. "Were it His will, and we had only a nail of the tent and a hammer, we should smite low our enemies, as did the wife of the Kenite when she slew Sisera as he fled from the borders of Kishon—hum, hum, hum!" and he purred like a cat dandling with its prey, and which it no more loses sight of than he lost the tenor of thought uppermost at the moment as he added, "Pity but what he had fallen amongst the brave to which he then belonged, before he came up to us to-day, a spy upon the land, and for which to-morrow he shall surely die."

"Die!" exclaimed Whaley, overturning the goblet by the sudden jerk of his hand, as he started back in his seat. "Die! He has surely done nothing deserving of death? Had you or I, colonel, plighted our troth to such a fair maiden as Mistress Bertha, and known that she and her father were in such straits as they now are, we should never have drawn bit or slackened bridle-rein until we had arrived at the rescue. As for the blow he struck, forget that. He shall crave pardon for it on the morrow."

"It is not for myself that I adjudge him to die. It is my duty to the cause, the Parliament, and the army that moveth me. Knowest thou not that were he not this night our prisoner, he would likely enough have been on his way, as fast as horse could speed, to the stronghold of Greythorpe, and have brought back with him by to-morrow's noon, Cleveland's whole garrison?"

Whaley could not reply to this. It was, indeed, the darkest feature of Thurlby's case, that he had endeavored secretly to communicate with a detachment of Royalist troops, some few miles distant. But, Thurlby's messenger had been apprehended, and was a prisoner. The orders he received from Reginald had been overheard by a Roundhead spy sent out upon the path of the young Cavalier.

Whaley, after some further conversation, withdrew. Left to himself, Colonel Thrapstone rose and began to pace the apartment—slowly at first, and then with rapid strides as he was carried away by his increasing passion. Revenge consumed him. He burned to wipe out the stigma of the blow inflicted upon him by the Cavalier. Cowardly, subtle, full of bitterness and fiendish hate, he panted to crush the youth beneath his heel—thirsted with insane intensity for his blood, but dared not seek his revenge openly and boldly. He aimed to glide, snake-like, up to a defenceless foe, and strike his fangs into his heart unseen and undiscovered. For hours he walked the floor, clutching with his fingers, beating his brow, and pausing sometimes to grind his heel into the floor with uncontrollable fury, as if he fancied he held the prostrate form of Reginald beneath his foot. At last he flung himself upon a couch, and mused over the forthcoming events of the morrow, until sleep sealed his eyes.

Early on the morrow, he summoned Whaley before him. "Bring forth the prisoner," said he; "we will proceed to business at once."

"You are in a hurry with this bloody business," replied Whaley bluntly, and knitting his bushy brows as he added: "You were not always so eager to be at the work of death. I would rather lend a hand at helping a dozen out of the world in a fair field, where all are warm at the work, than sit here and see one brave fellow sentenced to death in cold blood. This morning's work will spoil my breakfast, while an hour or two of sharp fighting, hand to hand, has often given me a good appetite for my morning meal. Is he to have no quarter, colonel?"

"He shall have a fair trial," answered Thrapstone, biting his lip, and internally writhing under Whaley's remarks; for he keenly felt the allusion to his own cowardice. "Thou knowest that I am no lover of bloodshed," he added, with a peculiar glance at the lieutenant, while the latter passed his hand over his grizzly beard, and nodded in reply, "I have summoned the worthy knight to attend the trial; he is an old soldier, and, I doubt not, would have acted as I shall now act, had one of the Parliamentary soldiers, fallen into the hands of the Royalists, been proved to be a spy, and taken red-handed in the act of communication with the enemy."

Whaley was silent, for he well knew if the latter part of the charge could be proved against the prisoner, Cromwell himself would be one of the first to sign his death-warrant. Scarcely had the colonel done speaking, before Thurlby entered the apartment, his hands fettered, while he was strongly guarded by the soldiers who drew up in a line on each side of the hall, leaving the prisoner standing at one end of the massy oaken table. Sir Cuthbert Clipstone, accompanied by Bertha, also entered the apartment—for the latter, much against the old knight's wishes, resolved to accompany him. Two or three soldiers, who held such commissions in the troop as were common at the period, sat at the table, at the head of which the colonel and lieutenant were placed, and one of the former officiated as secretary. There was something martial in the way the whole group was arranged; for several of the armed troopers that stood guard over the prisoner had been tried in many a hard-fought field. Bertha took her station beside her lover, who greeted her appearance with a melancholy smile; he knew that his hour was come, and he was prepared to die. He looked for no mercy—he expected none. Sir Cuthbert gazed on the scene in sorrowful silence, and endeavored in vain to stifle the sighs which from time to time escaped from his sad heart.

The trial opened by the soldier who acted as secretary reading the charge against the prisoner, which was, that he instructed one William Wilmot to take a horse from the stables of the Old Chase Inn, ride for life to the fortress of Greythorpe, and bid Colonel Cleveland send a troop of soldiers to Clipstone Hall without a moment's delay, as it was held by the Parliamentary soldiers in the command of Colonel Thrapstone; and that the said Colonel Cleveland might rely upon all the aid that he, Reginald Thurlby, late captain in the Royalist army, could procure; and that, should the Parliamentary troop barricade and defend the Hall, there was a door facing the stables which opened into the underground portion of the building, which could be readily opened; and that, with the aid of Sir Cuthbert's domestics, there would be no fear of the Royalists obtaining ready entrance, and retaking Clipstone Hall from the rebels. The trooper who stood sentinel unobserved in the stables, and who overheard the prisoner give the order to Wilmot, stepped forward and corroborated the charge. Another trooper deposed to riding over to the Old Chase, and capturing William Wilmot, just as he was in the act of mounting the horse belonging to the host in the inn-yard. When the charge was ended, there was a painful silence for a moment or two, for the colonel seemed at a loss what to say, and before he had well finished his preliminary humming and hawing, Lieutenant Whaley said to the prisoner, "I opine this is the fortune of war, captain; you tried to serve your friends, and have been out-generalled, and there is no more to be said. Is it true?"

"It is true," answered Thurlby, and there was another painful pause.

The colonel was beginning with something about the spies that went up into the Promised Land, when Whaley rose suddenly and impatiently from his seat, and again said, "I suppose the sentence is, that he must be removed back to prison, until we receive further orders from General Cromwell?"

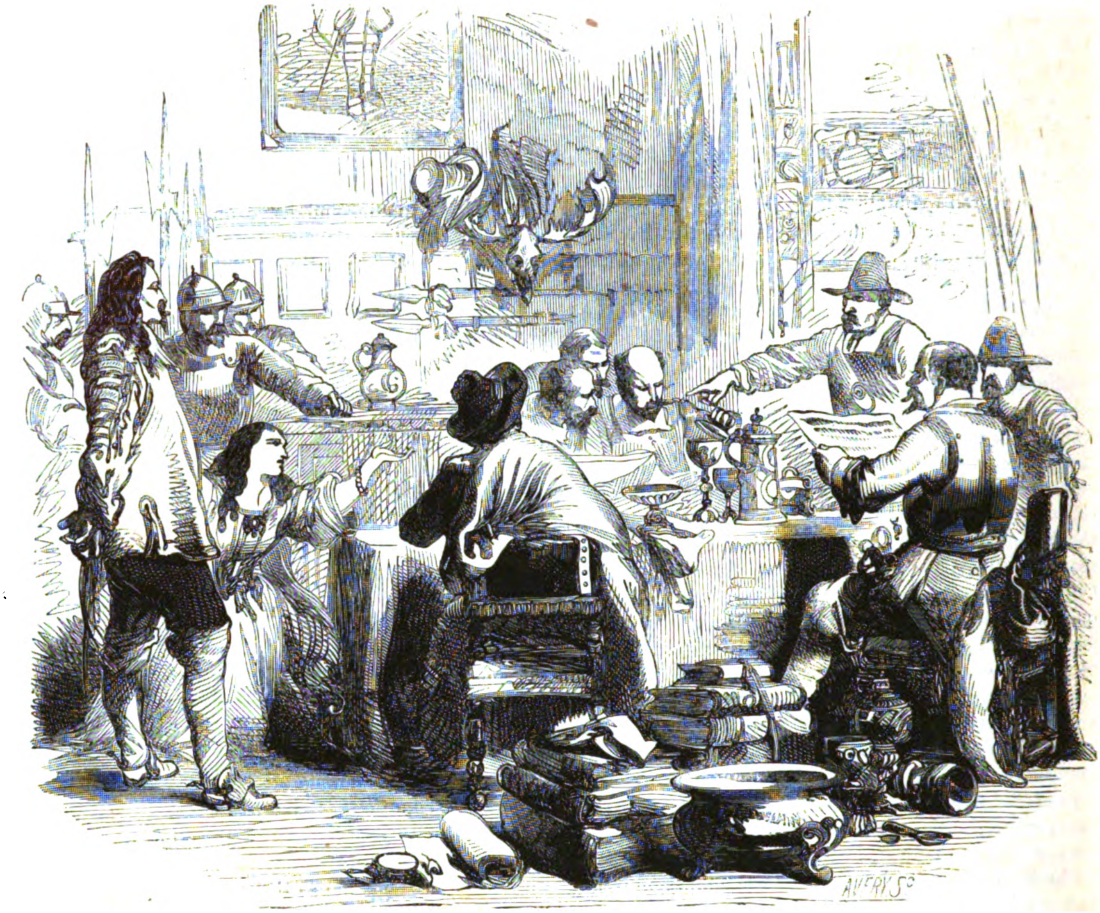
"I believe that I am commander here, sir," said the colonel, "for the present?, and if so, and as the prisoner has admitted his guilt, I see no necessity for either communicating with General Cromwell, or any other commander of the Parliamentary forces: and I hereby, as his own mouth hath testified against him, sentence him to be shot to death on the lawn before the Hall, at the noonday hour of twelve." Then turning to the secretary, he added, "Let the sentence be recorded, and you, Lieutenant Whaley, will see it carried into execution." He looked at Bertha, as he pronounced the doom of her lover, which the soldier was recording on the paper before him, while only the scratching of his pen broke the silence that reigned in the apartment, and was about to affix his own signature to the document, when Bertha, with clasped hands, rushed forwards, and exclaimed, "In mercy spare him! in pity to my father's grey hairs, save his live! Do plead in his behalf, good lieutenant," she added, placing her hand on Whaley's shoulder, "you are known, as he is, far and wide as a brave soldier, oh! plead for him!"

"I have, I have, fair maiden," answered Whaley, his voice faltering as he spoke, "but it is useless;" then turning round, he added, "Colonel Thrapstone, I refuse to execute the sentence. His blood be upon your own head;" and with a threatening frown he quitted the apartment. The troopers exchanged deep-meaning glances with one another, evidently in approval of Whaley's conduct, though they dared not, like him, disobey their colonel, for it was well-known that not a soldier stood higher in the estimation of Cromwell than the lieutenant. Although the colonel sat pale and speechless with passion, there was a fear about his heart, and he dared not issue the command to his soldiers to make Whaley prisoner, lest the fiery lieutenant should draw his sword against him and challenge him to combat upon the spot; for that blind obedience to a superior officer, which causes so many heart-burnings in the army at the present day, did not then exist, or, if it did, was not, when broken, visited with such severe punishment as now.

Taking advantage of the sensation Whaley had made, Sir Cuthbert said to the colonel, "I am an old soldier, and have had to decide upon matters of life and death when left in command, and I do not think that the severest stretch of military judgment could fairly find my young friend deserving of the sentence you have passed upon him, inasmuch as he never offered his service to you, nor in any way disguised his intentions; but, on the contrary, made no secret that he had thrown up his commission in the royal army on my account, to serve me and mine. Had he drawn his sword on your behalf, or pledged himself to support your cause—bad and evil as I believe it to be—still had he once done this, then held communication with a royal garrison, and endeavored to obtain a force from it, to attack those amid whom he had enlisted, then I would myself have adjudged him deserving of death as a spy, a traitor, and a double-faced enemy. But he has done none of these things, and if he did assume a false and friendlike appearance, it was surely pardonable in the face of such a force, and under such circumstances as he had to contend with. He who offends his king to serve his friend, will not be one of the first to go over and join that friend's enemies." As he ceased speaking, he looked at the prisoner—a look that told him how much he regretted ever having thought otherwise, and which called up a smile to the countenance of Thurlby, who, throughout, had stood calm and collected, more like a spectator than the victim that was to be sacrificed. Only the tears of Bertha had moved him, as they fell one by one on his fettered hands, and that was when he forgot, for the moment, his manacles, and endeavored to raise them to wipe the fast-flowing drops from her beautiful face. He offered no defence, and the few words he uttered were expressive of the contempt he felt for his enemy, for the colonel had not the courage to meet the gaze of his flashing and angry eyes. Having ordered the soldier, who acted as secretary during the trial, to see the sentence carried into execution at the hour he had named, he commanded Thurlby to be led back to prison, and prohibited the admission of any visitor without his written permission.

Bertha had fainted away in her father's arms, before her lover was removed, and when she recovered there was only Sir Cuthbert and her tiring-maid in the apartment; all the rest had departed, the colonel to meditate upon the measures he should take against Whaley, and to pass away the feverish hours as he best could, until the sentence was executed, for he resolved not to be present at the death. The troopers seemed discontented, and those that were told off and commanded to hold themselves in readiness with loaded arquebuses, when the sun marked the hour of twelve upon the dial, went away sullen and silent, having no heart to do what their favorite lieutenant disapproved of. A gloom and a melancholy seemed to have settled upon the sentinels that were stationed about the Hall, which the sunshine of that sweet June morning was unable to dispel.

Without, all was sunshine and song, for nature catches not the stain of crime, nor the feeling of sadness, caused by the deeds of man. The bee went humming in and out between the sun-dyed woodbines, and the plashed moss-roses. The murmur of the bees and the singing of the birds came in with the sunshine through the grated window of the prison, under which the young Cavalier sat, low, sad, and silent, as he thought that in another hour or two that sun would shine upon him no more for ever, that he should be sleeping in the dark, cold grave, and Bertha left alone in her tears. He looked up at the sunlight broken by the massy iron bars, and through it to that great mustering ground beyond the grave, and had faith that he should again meet her there, when all tears would be wiped from her eyes, and the sound of sorrow never more be heard. He felt it was hard to die, and leave one he so dearly loved behind, harder to sit and count the minutes, and to know that by the time the sunlight had fallen upon the chink of the third stone from the wall, he should he no more. He could see the shadow move while he gazed; it had but to pass over three more stones, and then the hour would arrive, when the last sounds he would hear would be the ringing of the arquebuses, and all would be over. Why had he not fallen in the field of battle, in the heat and hurry of the strife, where men had no time to think of death, but with their own hand hewed their way to glory or the grave? Oh! how different from being shot at like a dog, with no power to turn upon the enemy. What would he not give to have one final struggle with Thrapstone, even without weapons, and his enemy armed to the teeth! He rose under the emotion, and felt that only with his bare hands he could tear his hypocritical enemy limb from limb. He looked terrible in his anger, with his flashing eyes and clenched fists, and in his deep excitement heard not the door of the prison open until he saw his own beautiful Bertha standing by his side. Whaley had admitted her without consulting his colonel, and he was so much beloved by his men, that not one would refuse to obey his orders. It was a painful meeting—heart-breaking to know that on this side of the grave they would never meet again! So young, and so much as they loved each other, all the more fondly, all the more madly, through knowing that they must now part for ever—that he would never more look into the clear heaven of those beautiful eyes, that she should never again clasp his manly form nor hang any more round his neck; he, that he should no more feel the weight of that sweet burden; she, that the warm heart, which then beat against her, would soon be cold, and motionless, and dead. Oh! it was pitiful! very pitiful! and as he held her weeping in his arms, he saw the shadow creeping towards the edge of the fatal stone, which marked the limit of his life, which, when the sun had passed over, would leave him, like it, in shade and darkness, on that dim and mysterious borderland. Kisses, and tears, and sobs, and hopes of heaven, and glimpses of the great hereafter—what more could there be? He could scarcely turn his thoughts to heaven, with so much to love beside him; no, he would rather have remained with her, than have occupied the throne of the highest angel. Oh, love! oh, death! while they stood entwined together, as if they never more could part, the stern sentinel threw open the iron-studded door that grated harshly on its rusty hinges, and exclaimed, "It's time;" and so he unwound her beautiful arms, he saw where the shadow fell upon the stone, and he placed her gently and senseless beside it, before he was led out to execution.



IV.

With a quivering lip, his head half averted, and turned, with a mournful look, in the direction where he had left Bertha senseless, Reginald Thurlby passed out of the Chase-prison, without a feeling of fear at meeting the death he was doomed to receive, though sad pangs were gnawing like vultures at his heart, at the thoughts of the bitter and hopeless misery in which she whom he so fondly loved, and from whom in this world he had for ever parted, would be left. Stepping into the sudden sunshine dazzled his eyes for a moment, and he would have come in contact with the stem of a tree, at a turning of the embowered walk which led to the lawn, had not one of the troopers placed his hand on his arm. That slight touch recalled him to himself, and in a moment he stood upright, and walked with as firm a step as the boldest soldier that guarded him. When he reached the centre of the smooth velvet lawn, he found Whaley and the old clergyman ready to receive him; for, although the brave lieutenant had sworn that he would take no part in the execution, he could not resist being present.

"I have not the power to reverse this unjust sentence," said Whaley, speaking with an emotion to which he was a stranger. Thurlby made an attempt as if to raise his hand and press that of the kind lieutenant; but he could not, as his arms were pinioned. Whaley saw his intention in a moment, and bade one of the troopers release his arms, as he exclaimed, "Cut those base cords—a brave soldier who dies doing his duty needs not dragging to his death, bound like an ox." The trooper gladly obeyed him, while the soldier who held a commission below Whaley, and who had been appointed by Thrapstone to see the sentence executed, said, "But this is against the colonel's commands, who ordered me on no account to unbind him."

"Then obey his commands," said Whaley, placing his hand on his heavy sabre. The soldier drew back.

"The time is expired," said he. "Arquebusiers form the line."

"The time is, when the prisoner says he is ready, and not until then," exclaimed Whaley.

"Then I shall retire from the command, and report to our colonel, that——"

"I kicked you out of your commission like a cur and a time-server as you are," said the lieutenant, uplifting his foot as he spoke, and sending him half across the lawn with his heavy jack-boot, then bidding his arquebusiers form in line.

After such an explosion the fiery lieutenant appeared more calm, and, retiring to the opposite side of the lawn, he paced thoughtfully to and fro, leaving Thurlby and the pastor to their meditations, out of hearing of the troopers, though still within range of their firearms.

Sir Cuthbert had retired to a room at the back of the Hall to pass the time in prayer until the fiery knell rung upon his ears, for he could not muster courage to see his young companion die.

"It is a journey we must all take, my dear young friend," said the clergyman, addressing Reginald, as he held the closed prayer-book in his hand; "the only difference is, that thine is a quicker passage; preferable, perhaps, after all, to a brave heart and an impatient spirit, to the days and nights of agony and suffering which the afflicted have often to endure as they toss to and fro on their restless couches, and think the time long coming that bringeth the end."

The pastor then persuaded him to kneel beside him, and offer up a prayer to Heaven. Reginald did so, and when the pastor arose, he still remained kneeling with closed eyes, and the troopers with levelled arquebuses drew a few strides nearer, then paused, and looked towards Whaley for the signal to fire; but the lieutenant waved them back, for he saw Thrapstone and the soldier whom he had so unceremoniously dismissed approaching, and it needed no second glance to tell that the colonel was overboiling with rage.

The dark spot gathered on Whaley's brow, and the cowardly colonel trembled as he looked upon it, while the brave words he was about to utter clave to his tongue, and the lieutenant was the first to speak, which he did by drawing his sword and saying, "There is my answer for what I have done. Are you ready to receive it? For the rest I shall answer to General Cromwell."

"Soldiers, advance, and make Lieutenant Whaley prisoner," exclaimed the colonel.

"Keep in your ranks, my brave companions," said Whaley; "you were never backward to obey my commands in battle, though he," pointing to the colonel with a look of contempt, "was never present to lead you on."

At that moment a shout was heard, accompanied by the clatter of hoofs, and the clang of steel. Thurlby sprang to his feet. Whaley gave a rapid glance down the valley, and then rushed to the head of the troops. Thrapstone turned deadly pale. The sounds drew nearer. Thrapstone saw that his revenge was endangered. He mustered courage to act. "Fire!" shouted he; "soldiers, do your duty!"

"At your peril!" thundered Whaley. "The enemy are upon us."

The approaching horsemen now came dashing up the avenue, headed by the Royalist Colonel Cleveland. In an instant the Parliamentarians were surrounded. The force was an overwhelming one, and the resistance was but faint and scattering. Thrapstone, terrified and trembling in every limb, could give no commands, and Whaley stood grimly looking on, resolved that the responsibility of the defeat should fall where it belonged, and Thrapstone's cowardice be thoroughly exposed in the proper quarter.

The capture was so rapid, and the rescue so entire, that in a few minutes Thurlby was returning the warm and friendly grasp of Cleveland.

"Body o' me," exclaimed he, "I deemed not that thou wert so near falling into the clutches of death's head and cross-bones as this. Why, thy pretty bird in bower would have wept out her bright eyes, an we had been a few minutes later. But this sharp ride has whetted our appetites. I will but give an order to shoot the whole of these crop-eared Puritans, then see if the Chase larder is still worthy of its former good name."

And he was about to turn round and give an order for the execution of the Parliamentary troopers and the preparation for dinner in the same breath, when Thurlby interceded, and by a few words interested the colonel in behalf of Whaley.

Only one life was lost, amid the random shots fired by the Royalists, and not one of Whaley's troops regretted it, as the bullet struck the time-server whom Thrapstone had promoted and the lieutenant chastised. He fell dead on the very spot where Thurlby had knelt a moment or two before.

"What an uncouth Mercury you sent on so important a mission," said Cleveland; "the fellow had neither hat nor boots, and confessed to stealing the sorry nag he was mounted on, which was without either saddle or bridle. Not but what he got a taste of the latter, for appearing before a royal fortress in so sorry a plight, and it was the loud objection he made to the reward offered that first drew my attention to the fellow. He said he had escaped from the Chase-prison, and he had the hang-dog look of a thorough jail-bird."

"Then my messenger, who was intercepted, must have escaped," said Reginald.

"He did so, by the aid of a young wench about the Hall—his sweetheart, I believe. He stole out barefooted and bare-headed, and away he ran in this condition until he found a bare-backed steed, when he came over hedge and ditch, catching a stray horse every now and then as he could when he had ridden the others down, and, most unfortunately for his own back, the last one he mounted, and which he rode up to Greythorpe, belonged to a sturdy yeoman, one of my own troopers, so that he came up to the fortress 'red-handed,' and was receiving punishment for the well-intentioned theft, when his cries assailed my ears—fortunately for your and your pretty bird—and I soon understood enough to sound the trumpet to 'boot and saddle,' and here we are. But my throat is husky, and I trust these crop-eared rascals have not emptied every flask in the cellars."

And so this brave and reckless soldier ran on, talking as carelessly of matters connected with life and death as he did of women and wine, for he was as ready to draw his sword and rush into the heat of battle at a moment's warning, as he was to sit down and empty a flask.

The ringing of the shots aroused the good old knight, Sir Outhbert Olipstone, from his prayers, and he came forth like another Priam to beg the body of his Hector—for Reginald Thurlby was then as dear to him as his own son had ever been; and as the old man came down the Hall steps wiping the tears from his tears, the heart of Cleveland heaved, and his voice faltered as he embraced him. Bertha had long before been borne away senseless to bed: the parting from her lover had been more than she could endure, and for many hours her life was despaired of, though the old Leech never once quitted her chamber.

After embracing Cleveland, the aged knight threw himself into Thurlby's arms and wept like a child; and there was more than one among the Parliamentary prisoners who turned aside their heads at that painful meeting, and thanked Heaven that their arquebuses were still loaded, although they had surrendered to the Cavaliers.

Down Whaley's sun-browned cheeks the tears trickled like summer rain, and he looked on Thrapstone as if he would have liked to kick him to conceal his emotion.

We must pass over the meeting of Reginald and Bertha. The poor girl could scarcely at first comprehend the extent of the good news that was brought to her; but when he was led to her, the joy that flooded her heart and soul was almost too much for her to bear. She fell fainting at his feet. She awoke raving, and so continued many hours. Sense, however, dawned at last. A calm, rich, full joy followed.

"I thank thee, Heaven!" she muttered many times.

I need not tell you how Reginald and Bertha became united; how they lived many, many years at Clipstone, happy and devoted to each other to the last; nor need I follow the fortunes of the other characters. Thrapstone was disgraced by Cromwell before the whole army. Honest Whaley got to be a colonel eventually himself, and Sir Outhbert lived long enough to see a brood of happy grandchildren around him.

Clipstone Hall still exists, crumbling now, and overgrown with ivy—uninhabited, visited only by the curious—an object of interest for its great antiquity, and as a fine specimen of the ancient manor-house.

RESTLESSNESS.

I.

Down in the harbor the ships lie moored,
Weary sea-birds with folded wing—
Anchors dropped and sails secured,
Yet on the water they rock and swing,
Rock and swing,
As though each keel were a living thing.

II.

Silence sleeps on the earth and air,
Never a breath does the sea-breeze blow,
Yet like living pendulums there,
Down in the harbors, to and fro,
To and fro,
Backward and forward the vessels go.

III.

As a child on its mother's breast
Cradled in happy slumber, lies,
Yet, half-conscious of joy and rest,
Varies its breathing, and moves, and sighs,
Moves and sighs,
Yet neither wakes nor opens its eyes.

IV.

Or it may be, the vessels long,—
For almost human they seem to me—
For the leaping waves, and the storm-wind strong,
And the fetterless freedom out at sea,
Out at sea,
And feel their rest a captivity.

V.

So, as a soul from a higher sphere
Fettered down to this earthly clay,
Strives at the chains which bind it here,
Tossing and struggling, day by day,
Day by day,
Longing to break them and flee away,

VI.

Strive the ships, in their restlessness,
Whether the tide be high or low—
And why these teardrops, I cannot guess,
As down in the harbor, to and fro,
To and fro,
Backward and forward the vessels go.

Portland, Me. F. P.

HAROLD:

A TALE OF TO-DAY, IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

BY OLIVER BUNCE,

AUTHOR OF "LOVE IN '76," "BLANCHE DEARWOOD," ETC.

CHAPTER I.—FATHER AND SON.

"FOUR o'clock," said my father, "and there comes the carriage over the hill. Exact to a minute, as he ever was!"

"Bless me! what an odd-looking carriage!" burst out my sister Imogene, who had hastened to the window, and was peeping through the blinds.

"Odd enough, and old enough," said the supercilious I, flinging down my pen upon the page which I was writing, and turning to watch the approach of the vehicle; "and I suppose its contents will prove equally ancient and rather more odd."

"Young gentleman," replied my father drily, "I have known men of fifty, who could have tripped the heels of Master Mark Adonis, even at that inconceivably old age."

"Bear that in mind, Mark, by all means," roguishly put in my sister, "your vanity is really beyond expression."

"'Pon my soul, Imy, like the fugitive, you cry thief the loudest of the crowd."

"Good gracious, you don't mean to call me vain?"

"Put up your foils, you clumsy bunglers," interrupted my father, "here they are at the door."

The carriage was a high, swinging, huge barouche of the time of the Revolution—cumbersome, capacious, seedy, and uncomfortable. A negro was on the box, and upon the open seats were two personages—a man of about fifty, and a youth of not more than eighteen. My father went out upon the piazza to receive them. The eldest sprang from the carriage and took my father's hand. He was tall, dark, hollow-cheeked, hollow-eyed, with iron grey locks, and a sad, calm, manner. He bowed his head in response to my father's words of welcome, but did not speak. I observed, however, that the hands of the two men remained for some moments in each other's grasp, and I could see that our visitor's manner was in some way understood and appreciated by my father.

The stranger now turned, and taking by the hand his companion, who stood on the gravel-walk leaning upon the carriage door, presented him to my father.

The relationship between the two new comers was very evident. It needed but a single glance to see that they were father and son. The boy possessed the elder's features and cast of countenance—the sunken eyes, the forehead covered with thick locks, the pale, thin cheek, the compressed, sad lips, even the same reserved and gloomy manner.

My father led them in, but to my suprise, not into the apartment where we had all been gathered.

"Mark, who is Mr. Clarefield?" exclaimed my sister, abruptly turning to me.

"Don't know, Imy. It's very strange all 'round. A very old friend, father says, but it is deuced queer I never heard him mention his name until within three weeks. I'm a little puzzled, I must confess."

"Oh, then you condescend to be curious, like the rest of us."

"Don't shoot those blunt little arrows, Imy. They hurt nobody."

"Blunt, perhaps, but they hit the mark."

"Bless me, Imy, is that meant for a pun?"

"Isn't it a good one?"

"Puns, my dear girl, are poor wit."

"So everybody says who can't make them. But do tell me, Mark, about Mr. Clarefield. Don't you think Harold singularly handsome?"

"I can't say I do. He's singularly like his father—that's all I noticed."

"Beautiful eyes, Mark, and such a sweet, sad expression."

As she spoke, the door opened, and the subject of her remark appeared in the doorway. He stepped into the room and lifted his hat from his head. He was slightly embarrassed, and cast furtive glances about the room.

"I am sent," said he nervously, "by Mr. Harlow—"

"And I am Mark Harlow," said I, jumping up and going over to give my hand, "and this is my sister, Imogene."

He shook hands in a nervous, impulsive manner with both of us, but without speaking, and then sat down. I could see then, that if not handsome, there was a peculiar fascination about his features, that caught and held magnetically the eye that looked upon them. I have said that his cheek was pale, but that word hardly expresses the strange pallor which overspread, and almost animated his countenance—a paleness that was lustrous and lit up by an inward light, and over which his large dark eyes, which at one moment were shadowed in blankness, at another, flashing up like a blaze in a forest, seemed to fling shadows of sorrow and thought. I have never looked upon a face that so entranced me. I could not withdraw my eyes from it, and became so absorbed in its contemplation as to forget my duties as a host. Imy (everybody calls her Imy, and so I prefer to have the reader do so) was the first to speak. She said a simple word or two about his journey, fatigue, &c., to which he answered briefly, almost curtly.

"Our northern country compares unfavorably with your tropical scenes," said I, after another moment's silence.

"I don't know. I am familiar with the South—

the North is new to me yet." Then, starting to his feet, and stretching out his arms, he exclaimed:

"I like the air. Shan't we go out? I never pen myself when I can help it."

He walked to the door, and out upon the lawn, we following him.

"Ah! This is fine. Beautiful! I like mountains—rivers. Do you, Miss Harlow?"

"Both," replied my sister, looking into his face with a wondering, abstracted air.

"Nothing suits me but the wild. I *don't* like the South, Mark. I want the rugged, the grand. My heart bounds on the mountain top. Look at that high peak. I will go there to-morrow."

"You love adventure," said Imy.

He stretched out his arms as if grasping at something. I soon discovered this to be his habit.

"I want quick blood." His eyes seemed to blaze for an instant and then go out.

"Mark is fond of adventure, too. You can pace these mountains together."

"I like to go alone," said he, abruptly.

"Oh, well, then," laughed Imy, "Mark and you are suited to each other, for he is a perfect recluse. He spends whole days in the mountains—alone, so he tells us."

I could not help blushing a little, as Imy mischievously glanced at me during this speech—*why*, the reader shall know anon.

"Alone—with a lady?" quietly inquired Harold, as he detected the glance Imy shot at me.

"Oh, no, indeed," exclaimed Imy, gleefully, "for pure love of the woods. He takes such long rides to see new prospects; he spends hours in merely gathering mosses; he's so fond of botany, that entire days are occupied in hunting up a single rare plant. He disdains company—that is, he disdains mine."

"He is in love," said Harold, with his characteristic bluntness. Imy clapped her hands and laughed. Imy, whose high spirits had been slightly dampened by young Clarefield, on his first appearance, was now recovering the natural gleeful and buoyant temper of her mind, and I could see that her laugh, her joyous, sunny nature, fell athwart the gloomy dark current of Harold Clarefield's thoughts, with a softening and beneficial influence. He seemed attracted to her. His eyes followed every movement. He listened greedily as she spoke, with his gaze fastened on her face. He even drew near her, and lifted a stray curl that had fallen over her shoulder, putting it with nervous fingers to its place.

"Let us walk," said he suddenly; "how beautiful the river is!"

Imy ran in to get her bonnet, and then we walked down to the river's edge. The stream upon whose border, Mr. Roger Harlow, sometime banker, and late of St. Mark's Place, New York, had erected his country house, ran through a small valley on the line of one of the rail-roads that diverge from the great city. It was a narrow, devious stream, never touched by the keel of vessel, save the tiny crafts that were sent dancing over its surface, with Pleasure at the helm. It was a merry, wild, free little stream, disporting itself after no known law, careering onward through green woods, wild forests, jagged and dark clefts, hurling itself down rocky heights, leaping with its glad young life over impeding objects, and rushing away with its gay, gleesome laugh, reckless of its future, of the storms that were to darken over its surface, or the turbulent, never-resting sea into which at last it was to plunge, stained, wearied, and heavy-laden.

The valley through which coursed this river, was one of the most beautiful I ever beheld in America. It extended between two ranges of high hills, or mountains, sometimes compressed into a narrow clove, at others expanding into a sea of meadow, undulating and green, with the river's course marked by its willow fringe, save where orchards and groves and cottages varied and beautified its banks. Spurs of the forest at intervals shot down the mountain sides far into the valley; and occasionally green pasture land had thrust itself laboriously and obstinately up some less rugged peak. My father had selected his grounds upon a narrow part of the valley, where a lawn-like bank extended to the water's edge, thickly studded with grand old trees, with the opposite shore rich wooded, abrupt, and wildly picturesque, and below, the valley opening into a wide and rare panorama of wood and glade, orchard and meadow. Below some miles where the hills converged again, the valley was crossed by a rail-road viaduct, of many massive granite arches, reminding one by this unusual adjunct to an American landscape, of some Continental scene.

We reached the river's edge, and walked along its winding bank. Harold's reserve wore off rapidly. Strange fancies, and wild, fantastic thoughts began to break from him. His temper showed an ever-varying mood—bitterness and gentleness, sarcasm and pathos, light gay humor, and deep, dark passion. He was impressed by every change in the scene around him. He shivered when the sun passed behind a cloud; a gloomy shadow seemed to rest upon him until it emerged again. The smooth, soft scene lulled him; the wild and rugged inspired him. He reminded me of Hamlet's antic disposition.

The river appeared to fascinate him. He would pause and look at it with eager, straining eyes. He walked down and let the waves ripple over his feet.

"I see life in a river always," said he, musingly; then adding with a sudden gloom, "and death sometimes."

"And death?" said Imy, with a shudder, who was affected by his changes of feeling.

"It certainly is like life," said I, tritely enough.

"It flows, every drop in the wide world, onward to the ocean. That's why it is life."

"But how is it death?" said Imy, clinging to the painful image.

"Is it not often a grave? Oblivion is in its depths. It ought to be the common cemetery — with life flowing for ever over you — life sucking at your dead heart and rushing on with it particles to eternity. I would rather mingle with a river than with dust."

"Why, Clarefield," exclaimed I, "let us forswear such dark subjects. Can't we talk of happier things?"

"No," said he, "I like it best."

"Not death?"

He stretched out his arms again.

"Not death, but something more than this. Life is a lie. It has mocked me long enough. It offers pleasures that prove bitter, sensations that are torments, feelings that are adders."

I looked at him with astonishment, and instinctively drew my sister nearer to my side.

"I would rather be a bird," he continued, walking up and down the river's edge, with his head bared, sometimes splashing into its pools; "a beast, anything than what I am. Don't I know? Don't I feel? Life is a tug at the heart, a brand upon the brain. It is something to be rid of—to be thrown off. I cannot even sleep. I cannot breathe."

Again that grasping, eager, out-stretching of the arms. He was not addressing us now, but giving unconscious vent to his emotions.

"Life lies a weight upon my breast—thrusts its hot fingers into my veins—holds my brain in a vice. I will be free some day."

"Great Heaven," I whispered in Imy's ear, "this is madness."

Hot tears of pity sprang into my sister's eyes, but she did not reply. The unhappy youth turned suddenly towards us.

"You like the world," said he, "to dance through its puzzling mazes, to whirl through its follies, to drink its tasteless pleasures. I defy it. I hate it. I strike my foot upon it!"

"Harold! Harold!" said a calm, gentle voice over our shoulders. I turned and saw my father approaching with Mr. Clarefield. A smile broke upon the features of the lad. His flash of misanthropic bitterness expired, and he went up to his father's side and placed his hand upon his arm, in a subdued, tender way, which contrasted remarkably with his previous manner.

My father presented us to Mr. Clarefield. He bowed.

"You know my son already," said he, in a low tone; "he is eccentric sometimes. You will learn to understand him in a little while."

We all turned back towards the house, father and son walking together. Between these two a perfect chord of sympathy seemed to exist. The quick nature of Harold was soothed, calmed and softened by the mere presence of his father.

"What am I to think?" said I to my father, as we fell back a little behind the others.

"Think charitably," was his characteristic and laconic reply.

"But who is Mr. Clarefield?"

"An old friend—unfortunate, as you see."

"Is Harold really—"

"His son?" said my father, cutting my query short; "Yes. But yield me, Mark, one request. Don't let the father see that you watch the movements of his son too closely. He is sensitive that way."

That night Imy and I sat together discussing our strange visitors.

"Harold affects me strangely," said she; "I shudder at his wild words, and yet he almost fascinates me. It is sad, very sad."

We talked of his singular, unearthly beauty, of his wonderful eyes, of his too certain doom, of the extraordinary, but happy influence exercised over him by his father, of the great depth of the love between them, of the sad, care-worn countenance of the elder, of the object of their visit here, yet unexplained—we talked upon the theme in all its many aspects, lingering upon the subject with thrilling interest hour after hour.

As I ascended to my chamber near midnight, I was attracted while passing through one of the passages of the second floor, by a flood of light streaming through the open door-way of the room in which young Clarefield was lodged. My course took me past the open door, and instinctively impressed by the silence of the hour, and the mystery which surrounded the unhappy youth, I passed cautiously and noiselessly on, until I reached the spot, when the rapid glance I sent into the room, arrested and chained my feet to the floor. That single glance revealed to me a scene which has always lived in my mind as a condensation of the unhappy history of this father and his son.

Harold was tossing in a restless sleep—his breathing heavy—his arms tossed above his head. Upon the bedside was seated the father—one hand pressed upon the heart of the sleeping boy, the other smoothing back the damp locks from his moist forehead—while tears, unrestrained, hot, and full of anguish, rolled down his features, and dropped one by one upon the cheek of the stricken boy.

I could not move, and scarcely breathed. I stood and looked upon the scene with a profound sense of awe and reverence, until a broken cry from the sleeper startled and alarmed me, and then I crawled off to my own couch, to lay for hours musing upon this single insight into a mighty sorrow which chance had afforded me.

CHAPTER II.

THE PORTRAIT—A MORNING RIDE.

I AWOKE the next morning from a dream, in which Harold Clarefield was oddly and painfully associated with one who was a frequent guest to my sleep-rocked fancies. Why Grace, the fair object of a deep, and sweetly-treasured passion, should come to me in my dreams that night, coupled with Harold, is stranger to me now than it was then. We would all be prophets, if we knew how to interpret the signs that lie about us. The veil is often lifted, but while this "muddy vesture of decay doth grossly close us in," we cannot read the revelation. Who, in looking back, cannot see where the fore-knowledge was vouchsafed, could the sense have only understood the sign—clear, and plain enough *after* the fulfillment?

The sun came streaming through my window, its rays falling upon a portrait of my dead mother, which hung above the mantel. I was fond of this portrait as I had been deeply fond of the original. I stood before it every night before extinguishing the candle; and every morning when I rose. My mother's death took place in my sixteenth year. I had just entered college, when I was summoned home to her death-bed.

Let me not forget that hour! May it live in my memory for ever green! May it come between me and every thought of wrong!

The tears rush thickly into my eyes as I think of it now. It was the saddest and yet the sweetest scene I ever beheld. But who has not been one of just such a circle—who does not bear about him the remembrance of a loved friend's dying hour—speaking to him with deep eloquence—flooding his heart in calm moments with thrilling tenderness, and lifting him up to solemn aspirations of holiness?

It is not our moments of pleasure that leave the lingering taste of sweetness. Heaven help that man who has never felt a sorrow! He can have no holy and soft spots in his heart—no remembrances to cherish —no links with the Past crowded with its dim shadows —no temple in his breast where memory and he can worship together!

"Sorrow glides into charity — charity into happiness." These were my father's words. I think he never said a truer thing.

As I stood *this* morning before the portrait, the fall of the light, or an unusual shadow, or the confusion of my only partially awakened senses, warped the features into a momentary resemblance of Harold's. I started and rubbed my eyes. The likeness seemed to linger for an instant, and then faded away. It was something about the brow and mouth—an expression, an apparent movement of the lips, a fleeting configuration as through a transparency, which, when passed, I tried in vain to recall. The brow and lips, it is true, were not widely different from those of Harold's, but I could not conjure up the likeness again with all my endeavors, shift light or position as I would.

"I am possessed," I muttered, turning away from the canvas.

I shook myself roughly as if to arouse from a stupor. It was strange, I thought, that Harold's features should become so impressed upon my mind as to haunt my dreams in company with the fair face of Grace Ellington, and cause my waking senses to strangely mingle with those of my mother. I found myself, as my mind brooded over these circumstances, giving them a superstitious significance, until, by some turn of thought, aroused to the absurdity of my meditations, I dismissed the subject with a hearty laugh, very contemptuously reminding myself that nothing was more natural than for the strong impressions of the previous night to hover about me in sleep, and even to retain their influence in the half-wakeful condition of a sluggish riser.

In the midst of this re-action of feeling, there came a knock upon the door, and, in answer to my response, it opened and my father entered. This was something unusual, and I looked surprised.

"I have come to talk to you, Mark," said he, crossing over to the window, and taking a seat.

"Well, sir?"

"About our guests.

"I am very curious, sir, believe me."

"I dare say, Mark. There is no difficulty in believing that, I assure you."

"Who are they sir? Who is Mr. Clarefield?"

"A distant relative, Mark—but not of mine."

I glanced involuntarily and quickly at my mother's portrait. My father observed me.

"Yes, my son, of your poor mother. Mr. Clarefield was her cousin, one removed."

"Did they resemble each other—at any time—when young?"

"I never heard it remarked. Very slightly, if at all. I but rarely saw them together. When I first knew him, which was not until two years after my marriage with your mother, he was a widower. He married again—with what sad consequences you have only partially seen. Within three years from his marriage, his young wife was taken from his roof, fearfully and hopelessly mad."

"She lives——"

"She does. But this I tell you, Mark, preparatory to something I wish to say. Harold knows nothing of his mother—never be his informant. His ignorance is immeasurably his bliss."

"I will heed, sir."

"What I have come here to tell you, Mark, is, that this unhappy father has brought his son here, at my solicitation, with a hope, I need not say how fruitless, but none the less fondly clung to, that either our air, companionship, or the wholesome influences of our placid life, will accomplish what physicians have failed to do—bring back the poor boy's wandering intellect into some kind of healthy action. I do not share the hope, but the father is very sanguine; and his life is knit into that of the boy's. He could not survive the downfall of his son's reason; the frail strands that link Harold's tottering sense to sanity, are those which unite him to life."

"It is strange and sad."

"It gives us a double duty, Mark—to win the father from his too absorbing affection into a calm contemplation of the worst—to try what medicine we can minister to a mind diseased. Mr. Clarefield is keenly sensitive to his son's affliction. He shrinks from officious commiseration. Be cautious of his feelings. In what you do to guide and soothe the boy, let not the father see too plainly your knowledge of his son's evil."

"I understand you, sir."

"You are discreet, I have reason to think. This is all I have to say, Mark."

He walked over to the door, and stood with the knob in his hand.

"One thing, sir—is there no danger?"

"Of violence from Harold? Not the slightest. His frenzy exhausts itself in wild words."

He still remained, hesitatingly, in the doorway.

"There is something else I have on my mind, Mark."

"What is it, sir? Do not hesitate to confide in me."

He left the door, and came close to me.

"Tell me frankly, Mark, do you—are you—that is, you know Grace—I mean Miss Ellington?"

"I do, sir," replied I, with the consciousness of blushing very red, and speaking confusedly.

"Mark, you are," he still hesitated; "you are much in her society, so I hear."

"Yes, sir."

"She is Dr. Ellington's daughter?"

"His ward, sir."

"His ward, and the same name?"

"Is that very singular?"

"No." My father drew his hand over his mouth, and stared upon the floor for a minute.

"I will see you again, Mark. You must confide in me—as I will in you."

For an instant I was on the point of making a clean breast of it, but my father turning abruptly to withdraw, the impulse was checked and the word left unspoken. *Had* it been spoken, how much of suffering would have been saved me!

I went on leisurely completing my toilet, musing on what my father had told me, and pausing occasionally before my mother's portrait with the hope of catching once more a glimpse of its likeness to Harold, which I had so distinctly though fleetingly seen, when a well-known voice called me loudly by name beneath the window.

"Why Frank, Frank Bloomer!" I exclaimed, running to the window. "What's in the wind, Frank?"

"A gallop," he replied, "nothing more. Don't you want to try the speed of True?"

"Never doubt it, Frank. I will be with you in an instant."

Frank Bloomer was the handsomest, the best natured, and the best hearted fellow in the county. Nobody ever knew him without liking him. His honest, frank hand was out to everyone. Generous deeds, kindly words, and bright smiles, made up his history. I had always liked him immensely, from the first day I knew him, but that was only what the whole neighborhood did.

In a very few minutes I was with him on the lawn. He was still mounted, his reins dropped over the neck of his horse, who was leisurely cropping the grass at his feet. But, by this time, he was not alone. Imogene was standing near him, and Frank was bending down to whisper a word in her ear.

I wonder why Imy started and blushed when I came up; I wonder why she nervously plucked a flower and began pulling it to pieces; I wonder why she twisted and patted her little foot, and looked so very confused; I wonder why—but pshaw! I say too much. I speak my part, cues and everything, all at once.

I did not stop long to note those love-signs. I hurried to the stable, and in a few minutes rejoined them, duly mounted.

"Come, Frank," said I, "True is in splendid condition. He will give 'Bloomer' a breather." Frank had named his horse after himself.

"Twenty minutes is all I can give you," said Imy; "breakfast is nearly ready."

"Why don't you ask Frank to come back with me?" said I bluntly. Imy blushed.

"He has already consented," said she.

"Oh!" replied I, with a look that sent the blood mantling over her face; "but come, Frank, twenty minutes is a short leave."

The next instant we were stretching in fine style over the dew-gemmed turf.

Those early morning scrambles were my delight. Not unfrequently, however, my companion was one I liked even better than Frank Bloomer.

It was a crisp, glorious morning, and the horses led off in fine style, True a little ahead. We cut the air like an arrow, and the blood sped through my veins in wild riot. But I soon saw that Frank was not quite so merry, nor in such high spirits as usual. He seemed thoughtful. When we drew up to breathe our horses he was very silent, and when I rallied him, he only stammered and looked confused. At last he began to talk, but, which he rarely did, he talked about himself. Frank was frankness itself, without a taint of vanity or egotism. I knew very well, therefore, that all this was preliminary to something of importance. He commenced by saying that in three days he would be twenty-one; that he was to give a ball and have a fine frolic; that of course we all, every one of us, would be sure to come; that now he was twenty-one, or so near to it, he had found it necessary to decide upon his future career; that one time he was very ambitious and wanted to make a noise in the world, but was bravely over such *youthful* folly (*almost* twenty-one, recollect); that he believed it was his duty, as his father was dead, to settle down at the old homestead with his mother—and—and—(here he broke down a little, but soon resumed)—and be an old country gentleman; that he didn't know but he should like it—indeed, he was sure of being the happiest of men—if—if—he only could be happy; that I was his friend, and he liked me very much, and liked my father very much, and liked—in fact, liked us all very much; that he wasn't rich, nor very poor; that the farm would all be his own, and it was considered quite a good one; that some people thought twenty-one very young, but it didn't seem so to him, and what did I think? And here he stopped his horse in the road, and looked at me very anxiously, with his countenance pale and red by turns.

"Why Frank, what *is* the matter?"

"Mark, the fact is, Mark—I want to tell you all because you are my friend—Imy and I—that is, I——" he spurred his horse up close to my side, and grasped my arm, "I want you, you and your father to *give* me, Mark, a jewel the world isn't rich enough to *buy*."

"Imy? Do you mean it? Hurra!" I threw up my cap in the air with such a shout, and burst out in such a wild ringing peal of laughter, that Frank stared at me as if I were mad.

"Give you Imy? To be sure——"

"Great Heaven! Look there!"

I turned quickly, and at the sight Frank was pointing out, I could feel my hair stand up on end. We were near the river, not more than a hundred feet from its bank. Several hundred yards above us, on the opposite shore, the earth had been washed out by the current from around the roots of a huge tree, until it had settled from the perpendicular to a low angle, stretching across the stream and even over the opposite bank. The bank on each side was jagged and high, and the river ran darkly and turbulently below; a few feet beyond the tree, hissing and boiling over a rocky bed. The place was noted up and down the river as a dangerous spot, where neither boat nor swimmer could be sustained for an instant. Several large and thickly tangled boughs of the tree reached and swept the surface of the river, and upon one of them, supported only by his feet and arms wound about the lighter branches, swinging to and fro over the river's surface, was Harold Clarefield. How he reached his position is my wonder to this day.

The first glance at this sight sent the blood curdling around my heart, but in an instant I was galloping rapidly to the spot. But how to rescue him? how to aid him? I soon saw that everything depended on himself.

"Harold! Harold!" I earnestly exclaimed, then checking myself, as, recollecting that to excite his quick brain would be only to hasten his destruction, and that nothing but perfect calmness and coolness on our part could bring him back to his rational self, I continued in an unconcerned manner—

"Why, Harold, are you taking a swing? What an odd one! Don't you know it is breakfast-time?"

"Is it? How deep, Mark? Hear the river sing. It is rare music. Would you lie here forever and hear it? I would."

"By Jove, Harold, the toast will be cold. That's better than music. Come, Harold, do? Come at once and you shall mount True. You haven't tried her yet."

This seemed to please him. He began to draw himself up the branch.

"If we could reach and crawl along the tree——"

"Hush, Frank," said I quickly in a whisper; "we can do nothing. If we stir to aid him, he will prove unmanageable. Keep perfectly calm."

With concealed terror and forced indifference we watched Harold's progress. A misstep would send him plunging into the stream to certain death; a single flash of his wild humor, in relaxing his care, would prove no less fatal. He drew himself along up the branch, thinking and talking of True, which I strove by every means to keep before his mind. I feared the consequence of a reversion to the subject of the river. His safety grew more assured every moment. He was light, supple, strong, and evidently possessed that genius, peculiar to some, for delicate balance and difficult footing. Suddenly he gave a leap into another branch, and catching a long pendant in his arms, gave a clear, startling bound into the air and landed by our very sides—before the cry of terror which broke both from Frank and me had died upon our lips.

"Harold," said I, authoritatively, "don't you go there again. It's an awkward place. You might slip in and drown, you know."

He looked at me with surprise for a moment.

"Drown! I like the river; why not drown, Mark?"

"Stuff, Master Harold. What would your father say to hear you talk such nonsense? You know what Iago says, 'drown cats and blind puppies.' They'd make better food for fishes than you or I, Harold."

"Food for fishes? That's not it. You lie with Heaven on your breast——"

"Come," said I, interrupting him and springing from my saddle; "Imy, I'll wager, is an impatient little scold at this moment because we are gone so long. Here, Harold, up quick and off."

I assisted him to mount, which he did in silence. Frank declared that he would walk with me, and while Harold rode on ahead, we dropped into a slow walk, Frank soon falling back upon the subject in which we were interrupted—assuring me how happy he was—how much he loved my sister—how long he had loved her—how he always would love her; didn't I think her the most beautiful creature in the world? (which I didn't) and the sweetest and the best? And wouldn't I plead with my father on his behalf, and prove to him that twenty-one was, after all, a remarkably mature age, a very nice age, and the most suitable age in the world?

"Mark," said he, with tears in his eyes, "I know how much I ask. I know what a boon the gift will be. But I will so cherish and love her—do not doubt me, Mark."

I would have doubted an angel as soon.

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CHAPTER III.

LOVE IN IDLENESS.

Through the vast aisles of an old forest, the slanting sun-rays of the evening sun were piercing in long, mellow, lance-like shafts of light. The ground, green and damp, was bristling with thin inter-crossing shadows of the trees. The arching boughs, bannered with pendant moss, were catching shattered fragments of light. The decayed limbs of a dead, barkless trunk glistened with a phosphorescent glow. Overhead, beneath the thick foliage, it was shadowy and dark, but through an occasional opening, the topmost branches could be seen, sheen-like and golden.

Against a knotted and knobbed oak, bearded fantastically, with gaunt dwarfed limbs that shot out low over the ground, was leaning a young girl, of twenty summers, perhaps, her fingers busy working an oaken garland.

Her face was singularly beautiful—a dark, ruddy, peach-ripe color, eyes dark and brilliant, hair black and combed in simple plain bands back from her brow; a mouth, full and very sweet in expression; a brow, calm and placid, such as I like to see in women.

The oak stood upon the outskirts of the forest. Approaching it with stealthy, rapid steps, unseen by the lady, was one the reader already knows as Mark Harlow.

So absorbed was the lady—we will call her Grace Ellington at once—with her occupation, or with pleasant thoughts, that the approaching footsteps fell heedlessly upon her ears. Suddenly, two arms were thrown about her neck. She gave a quick cry, and started forward, but a glance at the comer sent a bright glow to her cheek.

"Ah, Mark, is it you? I shall punish you for these frights."

"Anything but banishment."

"Banishment it certainly shall be."

"I don't believe you. That would punish the judge as well as the criminal."

"Impudence! You are spoiled, Mark. I am getting tired of you." This was said with the brightest look and the sweetest smile.

"Veracity! Veracity! Grace, where is your truth?"

"In the well, I suppose, where it came from," seating herself at the foot of the tree, and gathering together more leaves for her garland.

"A garland, Grace? Who is it for? Whose brow shall it grace?"

"A hero's."

"It is mine," said I confidently, and flinging myself upon the ground by her side.

"You are not a hero."

"No, but, by Heaven, I aspire. I have not accomplished, Grace, but give me time, and I shall do so."

"Accomplish? Your bane, Mark, is idleness."

"No, it is love."

"Then absence is the antidote. Leave me."

"I swear it is not. I am frantic when I am away from you, Grace. I swear—"

"Stop, stop, Mark. Nobody believes lover's oaths. It is useless swearing. I want facts, not words. Tell me how you pass your time, and you shall see how the charge of idleness is good. You called me judge—answer upon your truth."

"In love. 'Making woeful ditties to my mistress' eyebrows;' carving on every tree 'the fair, the chaste, the inexpressive she—'"

"Two quotations in a breath! That's enough of Shakspeare—for at least twenty minutes, Mark."

"Grace," seizing her hand, and holding it tightly, "you torment me. I love you to madness—a thousand times more than you love me, for you do nothing but banter me."

"Poor Mark!"

"I'll run if you mock me so, Grace. But let me tell you. You accuse me of idleness. You are unjust, and I will prove it. I have a secret—not a soul knows it—not even you, to whom my breast is glass, transparent of everything. Do not mock me, Grace. I tell you, because I want you to share my triumph. So listen. I am writing a book."

"A book, Mark," said Grace, suspending her work upon the garland, and looking thoughtfully upon the ground; "go on."

I was a little pained at this coolness, but I continued:

"Full of my glorious dreams, Grace—full of high thoughts, a grand book."

"A poem?"

"No, a romance."

"You will fail, Mark."

"Fail!" I dropped her hand. Her face was averted. "You think me a dolt," said I, with bitterness, "without genius, talent--a miserable, dull, incapable fool!"

"Are you just, Mark?" said she softly, placing her hand upon my arm.

I started up in excitement and paced the ground.

"You think I have no genius, Grace, but I will prove it yet. I will climb. The ascent may be hard, but I can master it. The mountain-top for me—I could not endure an obscure, dull career. I want fame, Grace. I want honor and greatness. I shall win them, too."

"Greatness!" said Grace, still thoughtful, "that word, so often misused."

"You doubt my power to be great—"

"No, Mark. But greatness is not fame—nor fame, greatness. One is—"

"I know," said I, impatiently, "the old, trite, dull interpretation. Greatness is goodness! Pshaw! Greatness is mighty deeds—"

"Strong deeds, I grant you."

"Oh, Grace, you *must* be my way of thinking. When I pant for greatness, I think of you too—see your brow crowned no less than mine. My love and my ambition are twin passions, dearest Grace—and what I win, I bring to your feet. But why, cruel and inexorable judge, why will I fail?"

"Your book, I mean, Mark, will fail."

"But why? why?"

"You must first get beyond all these emotions and passions before you can succeed. He who writes, must sit upon a cloud—the passions of the world beneath him --experienced, known, and mastered."

"Oracular and wise, 'pon my word. Go on, Grace."

"You mock me, now."

"No, I do not. Go on."

"If I appear to be wise, it is only because I respect what I have heard my guardian say. First books are so often failures, Mark, because they are the incoherent tumultuous overflow of emotions *felt*—rushing into being through vague, wild, but powerless expression. It is our dead passions only, Mark, which we can analyze, master, and express."

"Infidelity, rank. Look at the poets from the beginning."

"Like a woman, Mark, I judge only from the little world I see. But never mind. I have, perhaps, a reason for wishing you not to plunge into that dangerous course. Men who are ambitious make glory their mistress."

"What, jealous!"

"I am—or would be," replied Grace, laughing gaily.

"Silly girl. I might climb to the moon, and my Grace should ever be above me to worship."

"A very pretty speech. Yet I fear you might forsake me. Ah, Mark, for your sake, perhaps I should be glad to see you famous—but not for mine. Our happiness," placing her hands upon my shoulder, "does not lie that way, Mark."

"Our glory does."

She shook her head, slowly and thoughtfully. She had risen and we were standing together close by the trunk of the tree.

"Is there not more bitterness, heart-burning, envy, disappointed hopes, and unsatisfied desires, than of glory, Mark?"

"Oh, you little wise woman. Shake not those locks at me so ominously. I will not hear such croaking, Grace. I am young, and full of ambition—ambition and love. That's enough for the present. Come, your garland is finished. Who shall be crowned? Grace Ellington, the new Minerva!"

"Hush, you mocker. The garland is for you."

"For me? Shall I kneel?"

"You are foolish, Mark."

"Folly is the lover's privilege. Would you have me wise and sensible? Ah, Grace, I must say and do extravagant things—it were not love else. It is this playful bantering which restrains me on the brink of passion's deep gulf. Fire breaks from my heart, to escape from my lips in laughter. Grace, Grace, I do love you so!"

"Back from the brink, you madman—you are falling in!"

"No, no. I am at your feet. The garland, Grace."

"There—you are crowned—"

"Before the victory, but I swear to deserve it. I must kiss your hand."

"Have done—how silly, Mark!"

"There! there! Grace," catching her in my arms, "the hand is not enough."

"It is. Back, Mark. I'll have no raptures. You tread upon the brink, indeed."

"Your cheek, if not your lips."

She stood suddenly still, and demurely held her cheek up to my lips, but I could see an arch twinkle in her eye.

"Go," said I, my passion suddenly cooling, and turning her face away with my hand, "go, I climbed the wall to steal the fruit."

Grace laughed a gleeful laugh as she caught my hand and kissed it, then looking up, exclaimed:

"The sun is down. It's time for home."

"Her lips were near. One quick, full kiss—a cry—a bright, mantling blush—a frown with difficulty forced—a laughing threat—and that was all.

Arm locked in arm, we walked through the twilight together. The sun had just dipped behind the western hills. Our distance was scarcely half a mile—not far enough to fill up the long mellow space between the sunlight and the stars.

We walked by forest ways, with half merry, half passionate words upon our lips—saying and doing a hundred absurd things, as lovers ever have since Adam, the first love-maker, courted Eve. And yet, in all our loves' fond foolishness, we were wise enough to avoid the depths of sentiment, adventurously singeing and dipping our wings in the dangerous flame, as we hovered, and played about it, but guarding against a plunge into the consuming fire. Grace, in her woman's wisdom — and woman's wisdom is perfect in the sphere of love and feeling—knew what the danger was, and spun her tissues of mirth and laughter as the slight but firm ligaments, which alone could restrain and control the impulsive Mark.

We approached her cottage by the river walk, and at the garden gate I bade her good night. I saw her flit into the house, and then, in a pleasing reverie, I walked slowly away. The night was settling fast, and with the view of returning by the open road, I passed around in front of the house. My eyes were bent upon the ground, my thoughts absorbed, and I did not notice surrounding objects. In the midst of my reverie, I was aroused by the champing of bits close to my side. I looked up hastily, and found myself within a few feet of two of my father's horses, saddled, and tied to a post. A little surprised at this, I turned back to enter the house. The door was open and I went in. No one was near. I entered the parlor, my footsteps echoing loudly through the empty hall. Still no one. A free visitor, I felt myself at liberty to proceed. I strolled through the rooms, shadowy and dim in the fading day, and approached one that Grace called her boudoir — where amid books and music her time was mostly spent. I heard a rustling as I drew near—a receding footstep, and as I stepped through the open door, I saw a figure pass out from the room in the opposite direction, which I detected as my father's. Grace was standing erect by a chair, deadly pale, I could see, even in the darkening shadows.

"Why, Grace—" I began, but with a motion of her hand, she stopped me.

"Leave me, Mark. Come to-morrow. Go at once."

She sat down in excess of agitation. I moved towards her, but she almost imperatively waived me back. I turned away, pained and perplexed. Upon the door-sill I paused and looked back. Her face was averted. She would not see me.

With strange fears and dark thoughts, through the narrowing arch of the night, I passed slowly homeward.

(To be continued.)

SOMETHING NICE.

"Oh, what fine peaches! Stop one moment, only a moment—they are the first plump, sunny-cheeked peaches I have seen this year. Do stop!"

No, my companion was inexorable. The last bell of that prince of river steamers, the Alida, was sounding, and our carriage dashed by the stand heaped with delicious fruit, almost on the gallop. A flourishing check of the horses, a quick handling of luggage, a simultaneous spring for the gangway plank, and all was right. The Alida swept boldly out upon the Hudson, and we had pleasant seats upon the deck. But those peaches were left behind, the finest of this sterile season. That *was* a disappointment.

It was wonderful how that heap of sunny peaches haunted me that sultry morning. My lips were feverish, for I was not quite well, and this was why we took a trip up the river. We made inquiries for fruit on board. Water and wine, and delicious ice-cream there was, but no peaches, and then nothing else seemed capable of appeasing my thirst.

You would not believe how regretfully I looked back on the city; not that I objected to leaving its dust and glitter, but that stand of peaches with the stout old woman behind it, how I envied her! True, she might not afford to eat the peaches, but then she could enjoy the fruity odor, and I would have given something for that.

The North River scenery is superb, finer than that of the Rhine, and almost equal to the wilder passes of the Danube; but I had seen it a hundred times, and the rich crimson that lay like a haze on that heap of peaches, floated between me and the shore all the time. The boat was crowded, and a blessed old woman—I did not exactly know whether to call her lady or not—drew close to my seat, and looked with a sort of sympathy into my face. I have no doubt she fancied a half-famished expression there, for directly she drew a little closer, and opening a square travelling-basket that exactly fitted upon her lap, which was not over capacious, though she was, took out a couple of crackers, and placing them in her plump palm, offered them to me.

"No," said I, a little disappointed, for a faint idea of peaches presented itself as she opened the basket, and looked so compassionately my way, "no, thank you, not a mouthful. I am rather feverish and thirsty, that is all."

"Ah," said the dear lady, "that is very hard; have they nothing on the boat?"

"No," said I, with a mournful sense of bereavement, "nothing. They have inquired at the office; so I must make the best of it."

That dear old soul felt sorry for me, I could see that plainly enough; she opened her basket a little, and closed it again irresolute. It was a good-sized basket, and must have held something beside crackers. I am afraid I looked wistfully that way, for she gave me an encouraging nod, and a smile ran over the entire length and breadth of her face which, geographically speaking, offered a very uneven but broad expanse for the smile to travel over.

But for the peachy glow which my thoughts gave to everything, I might have been led to reflect more seriously on the probable social level of my new acquaintance. Indeed, I did turn my thoughts that way once or twice, when she ventured on some remark about the scenery we were passing. The language was of the best old Saxon, though I must confess it would have been improved by a slightly different arrangement of words. Her dress, too, had a doubtful originality of outline that might not have been considered the thing at Genin's, and her mantilla certainly did not come from Molyneux Bell's cut; but, having once mistaken a crown prince for a travelling agent, I am rather shy at jumping at conclusions, especially *en route*, when the best class of travellers usually dress the plainest, and so reserved an opinion regarding my new friend, subject to farther developments. One thing was certain, whatever deficiency might present itself in quality, there could be no want of compensation in quantity; for, search as you would, it was impossible to get even a glimpse of her chair, it was so completely overflowed and pressed out of sight by her person.

When the old lady opened her basket, I was disposed to take the bright view of her worldly condition—but, as she closed the lid, I paused with a prudent second-thought regarding the peaches that I felt more and more certain were laying their crimson cheeks together in the bottom of that basket, and began to reconsider probabilities, as a prudent person should.

"There, isn't that a nice house? I shouldn't mind living there myself," she said, lifting her plump hand, and pointing as well as the great strain upon her mit would allow, toward the opposite bank where two houses were visible; one, a pretty rustic cottage, nestled down in a hollow and half-buried in vines—and the other, a great staring white house upon a lift of the hills, without a tree to shade it, and with red, short moreen curtains streaming through the open windows. "I'm going to see my daughter, who lives in just such a house; to tell the truth, I make my home with her!"

"Just as I suspected," thought I, looking upon the white house with disgust. "A coarse vulgar woman, no doubt, with an underbred daughter, living in a house like that, flowing curtains and all——"

"I say," whispered the old lady, giving another peep into her basket, and bending toward me, mysteriously, as if delicately ashamed of her own generosity; "I've got something besides crackers in this basket. Come down into the cabin, and I'll give you something nice!"

My heart rose and smote me at the same time. Something nice—peaches, of course, it could be nothing else—that dear old lady, how kind she was, and I to think that a person so delicate and thoughtful could live in a great impudent house with red curtains like that; of course, it was all a mental slander. No, no, that little bird's nest of a cottage was the type of her home, and as for her dress, of course, that would be changed the moment she reached the dear shady little parlor in which her daughter sat, waiting her coming with the most affectionate solicitude. Upon my honor, I felt ashamed of myself, and that kept me a little on the reserve when my new friend arose from her creaking chair, and descended from the deck; carrying her basket carefully, I was glad to see, for bruised peaches are my abhorrence. I love them with the bloom on, and the gingerly way with which she handled her basket, charmed me. I would not follow her at once, that might betray too much anxiety; perhaps it would be as well to remain where I was till the two houses were out of sight, and had ceased to reprove my conscience. That would be about the dignified thing.

Well, I have a talent for waiting, and never in any sense eat my grapes half ripe. So I sat quietly till a last gleam of the red curtains saluted me from the hill-top, and then gathering up my shawl and parasol, went down to the cabin. My friend was evidently waiting, for she arose from an easy-chair as I came up, and whispering me to follow her, made a straight wake through chairs, children, and carpet-bags, towards the ladies' dressing-room. She said, confidentially, "I'm glad it's empty. Now for something nice!"

She sat down—placed the basket square upon her lap—opened the lid with a generous boldness, that looked like taking out half a dozen peaches at once, and looking in my face with smiling benevolence all the time, drew forth a pint bottle.

"There!" she said, holding it up with triumphant hospitality. "It's first-rate cognac. Isn't that something *nice?*"

THINGS WE TALK ABOUT.

Will the reader, before proceeding a single line, turn a few pages back to the picture of "The Power of Gold," and retain the place with thumb and finger while we discuss and admire it together? He or she (we wish that readers could be classified under some neuter non-committal gender), he, then, or she, as the sex may be, will recognize this picture as the second of a series of Pencil-poems from the poetic fancy of our artist, Mr. Dallas. Our readers may depend upon finding this series continued at brief intervals, through our pages. "The Power of Gold" is a perfect poem. It needs no illustration of the letter. It tells its own sad story finely—a story daily enacted, wherein youth and love are powerless before the Yellow Monarch of the world! It has fallen within the experience of the least of us—it comes home to us as one of those terrible phases in life-history, for which poetry and art have, from the beginning, awakened tears and sympathy. It has been told and sung many times, but never with a finer effect, never with greater and more touching force than by the pencil of Mr. Dallas.

In power of characterization, artistic excellence, and scope of idea, the picture invites close and attentive study. The best figure is probably that of the "dotard grey." It is perfect in conception and execution. The face, the pose of the body, the dress, gives it complete individuality. The next most striking figure is that of the mercenarys father. We see and know what he is at a glance. His whole history is unfolded. His prayer and hymn, his dream of life, all that he has known of love and hopes have been crowded into one word—gold! In the lovers we have, perhaps, less individuality than in the other figures, but more of passion. Crushed and dead hopes, riven hearts, dumb despair—it is all told. Language could not do it better. The allegorical adjuncts to the picture intensify and heighten the stern realities of the foreground scene, and are made to skillfully blend with the actualities of the story.

While the drawing was in our possession, before being placed in the hands of the engraver, it was shown to a literary friend, who, the next day, brought us a copy of a song written several months ago, by J. Howard Wainwright, Esq. (son of the late lamented Bishop Wainwright), in which the idea of gold triumphing over love is illustrated, in a different, though no less forcible manner, than by Mr. Dallas. The verses struck us as so exceedingly beautiful that we obtained permission to publish them.

The author calls them

THE SONG OF THE BELL.

Hark to the merry bells,
As in yon tall tower they ring;
This is the tale their music tells,
This is the song they sing—
Knell! Knell! Knell!
List to the song of the bell,
Whoe'er thou art;
Of a breaking heart
And blighted hopes we tell.

Enter in at the porch,
The joy-bells seem to shout,
'Tis an auction-room, and not a church,
Though no red flag hangs out.
Sold! Sold! Sold!
The tale has been often told—
Body and heart,
Like a slave at the mart,
Bartered away for gold.

In bridal garb arrayed,
Though the rose from her cheek has fled,
At the altar-foot stands a lovely maid,
And wishes she were dead!
Tears! Tears! Tears!
Heart-tears, though the lids are dry:
There's hell in the heart of that maiden fair—
On her pallid lips a lie.

With eyes all glassy and dull,
By her side a grey-beard old,
Of figures his head like a ledger full,
His heart a lump of gold.

Oh, man, with a sister dear
Oh, man, with mother and wife,
'Tis not a bridal you witness here,
But the death of a fair young life.

He, who had won her heart,
In happy days gone by,
Now standeth in the gloom apart,
All sad and mournfully.
Crushed! Crushed! Crushed!
For a little golden dust,
His joys all fled,
His hopes all dead,
A noble spirit lost.

Sold is that fair young thing—
If not her heart, her hand;
Alas! what power could she bring
Against a sire's command?
Bartered away and sold,
Body and heart, for gold—
Bartered away,
To that dotard grey,
For the damning greed of gold.

There side by side they stand,
Repeating the vows by turns;
He places a ring on that marble hand,
And the hoop, like fire, burns.
Love! Honor! Obey!
Say the lips, but the heart is dumb:
She fain would weep, she strives to pray,
But nor prayers nor tears will come.

Behind the altar rail,
In accents sweet and clear,
Binding for aye that cursed sale,
Stands the reverend auctioneer.
Going! Going! Gone!—
The deed is quickly done;
By that plain gold ring,
Winter and Spring
For life, are joined in one.

Prayed is the last short prayer,
And—joyous sight to see—
The minister, blessing the happy pair,
Pockets his golden fee.
Sold! Sold! Sold!
Let the bells be sadly tolled,
Better to tell
Of a funeral,
Than a barter of hearts for gold.

Gone is the bridal train,
But the bells, with their silver tone,
Still echo through the sacred fane
As I stand there alone.
Knell! Knell! Knell!
This seems the song of the bell;
Some bridals are made
In heaven, 'tis said,
But this was forged in hell.

—Two art curiosities now arrest the attention of the Broadway promenader. One is the copper statue of Washington, hammered out of sheet-copper by Mr. Neumann, a coppersmith. In view of the material, the implements, and the untrained skill of the worker, it is a wonderful product of patience, labor, and native genius. Its proportions are not, perhaps, entirely perfect. It is somewhat stiff and rigid, but no more so than we could expect. As a likeness, it is not inferior to some more pretentious performances. Copper statues are neither desirable nor agreeable, but Mr. Neumann, in his earnest evolving of grand ideas, through such poor channels as they could find, proves *himself* to be of superior metal, and capable, with proper opportunities, of becoming an eminent sculptor.

The other art-eccentricity is a portrait of Shakespeare, burnt with a poker upon a common board. Shrewish wives have always been addicted to the use of this peculiarly feminine weapon (offensive and defensive), but we here have it made available upon heads in a new, and we will venture to say, more agreeable way. The portrait is singularly good for such peculiar execution.

Let us say, however, that oddities and tricks in art ought to be condemned. There is a disposition in the public mind to mistake mechanical trickeries and juggleries for true art. People are prone to run after monstrosities in art just as they are in natural history. The five-footed calf is an institution which thrusts itself through all the arts, and invariably sets the world astare. There are an abundance of people who never take any interest in art unless it is standing on its head. They don't know what it means unless it is in connection with something fantastic. It must be playing some antic to make it to them at all acceptable. Of the existence of Idea they have no conception. They think that art means the triumph over mechanical difficulties. If a man will sing from the bottom of his boots, or make music from pop-guns—paint a picture with a tooth-brush upon a cheese-box, or mould a statue richly shaded with all the inter-blending hues of old castile, why then they are in ecstasies. The jugglery of a sham art is all they can comprehend. A wax figure in a pea-jacket is finer than the Greek Slave, because more life-like. At the Crystal Palace, a few years ago, the veiled busts (pieces of mere mechanism), were surrounded by a crowd of admirers, while the noblest groups of marble remained unnoticed. Go to any exhibition and you will see the same thing. The mechanical, the trick, the antic, the juggle, lords it over the Idea. Art, in its true significance, is but little known. It is still struggling to rise above the level of the pig with three heads.

—Amid the variety of shade trees in our city, how is it that the locust tree is scarcely to be found, when in the characteristics of beauty, cleanliness, freedom from worms, thriftiness, and rich depth of color, it peculiarly recommends itself for the purposes of city shade trees? We allude, let it be understood, to the yellow locust, and not to the honey locust. The foliage of the locust is peculiarly beautiful, rich and dark in hue, and affording contrasts in play of light and shade, exceeding in fineness of effect that of almost any other tree. The locust, moreover, is attractive when of any size or height—even when no bigger than a shrub. Its shade is singularly sweet; anything will grow under it. It does not exhaust the soil where is grows, but so enriches it as even to make a poor one good.

—The widow of Lord Byron is still alive and in good health. She has recently purchased the residence of the late poet Rogers, in London.

The friends of Mr. Rogers will hardly be pleased to know that his pleasant home has passed into the possession of a woman who embittered the life of his dearest friend. "Read this," said Rogers to me one morning, as we stood in the great bay window of his drawing-room, which overlooks the Green Park, just before going down to breakfast, "read this, and you will think more kindly of poor Byron." The letter which he held had just been taken from a portfolio of autographs. It seems that some charge had been made against the passion-poet, that he had spoken harshly of his wife, and he appealed to Rogers, his intimate friend, to say if he had not always mentioned her with the utmost respect. What Rogers' answer was at the time, I do not know; but he spoke of the charge to me as a cruel slander, and folding the letter, shook his head mournfully, more than once muttering, "Poor Byron! poor fellow, he was hardly used!" And now, Lady Byron is to reside in that beautiful home, to tread the hall that kings and emperors were proud to enter, and dispense cold hospitality from that exquisite breakfast-room which so many remember with pleasure. I, for one, could as soon forget a glimpse of the brightest corner of Paradise as the mornings spent in that beautiful residence. Here is a pansy that he gave me one afternoon as we walked in his tiny flower-garden which lay beneath the windows of the breakfast-room—and here are the volumes of his poems got up under his own eye with so much time and care, miracles of art and genius, all souvenirs of a thousand kindnesses, and many a pleasant hour, which brings sweet thoughts and regretful tears up from the heart together.

And so Lady Byron is to succeed Rogers. I would rather hear that the whitest snows of Mont Blanc—cold and icy as she is, but so much more beautiful—were drifting through those hospitable rooms. The very sweep of her garments on that genial floor will be like scattering the icicles of Greenland among the roses of Italy. Could no more suitable purchaser than this be found for one of the most beautiful residences in London?

How false is the idea that men of genius improve their prospects of happiness by marrying common-place women, especially women of narrow hearts. A mind rich in luxuriousness both of thought and feelings, matched with a sterile brain, and a heart whose aspirations never rise above proprieties, must be checked in its own natural developments without having the power to exalt the common-place into companionship. Genius may dispense with great intellectual superiority without an overthrow of happiness, but it must have depth of feeling and warmth of heart, or languish for want of sympathy.

Lady Byron was not to blame. She had no idea of the requirements of a nature like Byron's. His fiery passion was met with the most rigid decorum, and she had no idea that anything else was of consequence. She would doubtless have made an admirable wife to any common lord of the aristocracy, but had no idea of that lofty peerage which takes rank from a higher court than that of St. James. She had no sympathy with Byron's excellences, nor forbearance with his faults. The extraordinary and the ordinary came together, clashed, and fell apart.

The high-born common-place woman could not comprehend the heart she still had power to torture, and all his genius had not force enough to lift her one step higher than the level in which birth and education had left her. The rashness and the fault were Byron's in thus mating himself; in attempting to gather grapes from brambles, and moss-roses from ice-drifts, he filled his life with bitter disappointment, and died, leaving behind many a record of degraded genius that a true mate would have saved him from.

It is a curious thing, but told me as a fact in England, by those who know Lady Byron well—that since Byron's death she has become desperately attached to his memory, and speaks of him with the most respectful fondness.

A little of this womanly tenderness might have saved the poet from his early death, but it is of little consequence to the ashes that lie in the shades of Newstead Abbey. Affection that comes too late is but a mockery to the dead.

Why did Lady Byron take the house of Samuel Rogers? It was consecrated to genius, and what has she to do with that, except as a warning?

—Did you ever see a regular flood in the mountains? a perfect rush and whirlwind of waters leaping down every pass in the hills, and pouring in torrents from the sky? Three days and nights has the water poured down upon us in this lovely mountain region, till the very trees stooped to the force and burden of the storm, and men walked hurriedly to and fro in the village streets under their saturated umbrellas like shanghai's driven from their barnyard shelter.

The mountain stream which I could almost have passed dryshod last week, is roaring and swelling and careering through the valley like mad. I can see its amber-hued waves sweeping downward through gardens and corn-fields, but yesterday lifted fifteen feet above its surface, and the rain pours yet.

There will mischief come of this. People look excited and frightened. They rush eagerly up and down the street. The waters give a sudden roar and rush on madder than ever. What is it? A bridge has given way up stream, and its heavy timbers are tearing away at the mill-dam. like hunted tigers. Some plunge over and go pitching up and down through the torrents—some batter against the dam.

There they run again. Of course, nothing could stand that! the bulk head has given way at the dam, and half-a-dozen lovely gardens are swept off as a boy would rub pictures from his slate. Here comes a barn straggling and rolling downstream half submerged and with one corner lifted sharply up. A half score of dripping fowls are fluttering about it yet, and a fattened pig is squealing lustily, as he battles with the water. Poor fellow, he's gone before we have time to pity him. The pork for some poor family swept off in a minute, along with the cabbage, and corn with which it was to have been garnished.

News from the other end of the village. The tavern stables are under water, and forty horses stand knee-deep in their stalls, sensible of their peril, poor animals, and doing their best to break loose. There is some danger of of the tavern itself. The waves are dancing around the long verandah, and that is filled with frightened travellers. One is an Englishman with his wife, who thinks it very 'orrible to go out a-pleasuring, and 'ave their 'oss drowned before their faces. The Englishman is helpless. He drove his own buggy out a-pleasuring, but don't know how to get his 'oss out of danger, and has no idea how his harness should be put on. Dallas, one of the best designers in the country, is there, and teaches the Englishman, with his own hands, how to 'arness a 'oss.

Everybody works manfully, and the animals are saved, Englishman, wife, and all.

There comes a boy in great distress, his wet hair flying back, his cap crushed under one arm, the mud splashing around him as he runs.

What is it? Why, Big Jake and a colored gentleman have gone over to the point, fishing out floodwood; the river has suddenly made an island of the point; they are prisoners, and—oh! dreadful—without whisky. Nothing to drink—wet through—and nobody daring enough to carry a whisky-bottle over. Something must be done. The boy wants a wooden bottle and a rope; it is just possible that a strong man may fling the bottle within reach—that Big Jake and the colored individual may not get out of spirits and give up.

The boy goes off, and comes back again, looking joyful and greatly comforted. His friends are rescued; Big Jake waded waist deep into the flood, and holding out his brawny arms, received the whisky-bottle with shouts of thanksgiving, as it came whirling over the torrent. He and the colored individual have removed the stopper, and are imbibing its contents, turn and turn, as brothers in affliction should.

News from down stream: the noble tannery over which we walked last Tuesday, is swept away; the torrent is sweltering with hides, sprinkled with leather, and red with tan bark. The dam goes, too, and portions of the cotton factory which we were admiring at our last ride for its picturesque effect in a gorge of the hills. No mail to-day; no news but of broken bridges, and property swept away; poor men made poorer, and rich men disabled from helping them in their misfortunes.

I wish you could see the Fall, back of the fine old country mansion in which the hospitality of dear friends has housed me. Indeed, I wish you could see Prattsville this moment, all in commotion, as it is, like a beautiful woman in a passion. But I see Dallas going up in all the storm with his charming young wife, both artists, and rest assured we shall have a sketch of the Fall, at least, for the Magazine. How fortunate that Dallas should have come this way, on his bridal tour. Monday we all stood around him, as he took a sketch from under the very bridge that has been swept away. Lucky that we did not venture under it again, and fortunate to have got the sketch before the flood swept it away.

—MILLARD FILLMORE is an ill-used man. If we were a Presidential candidate, and as good a looking man as he is, we should certainly withdraw our name from the canvass, if we were compelled to see at every step such ill-looking "counterfeit presentments" as some of those which now stare at us from the shop windows, purporting, by the largest artistic license, to be portraits of Mr. Fillmore. The other candidates do not appear to be so badly treated. A Presidential candidate expects to have his good name filched from him by his enemies, but why must he be robbed of his good looks by his friends?

—GEORGE SAND has been "deranging," to use her own word, Shakspeare's *As You Like It*, for the French stage. Her version is not an adaption of that exquisite production, but a monstrous corruption of it. The plot is essentially altered. The melancholy Jacques is made to fall in love with Celia, and these two become the real hero and heroine of the story. Violent incidents and melo-dramatic situations are substituted for the tender melancholy, soft love, and innocent gaiety of the original. The spirit of the play is missed altogether. Its perfect Arcadian beauty, its unsurpassable sweetness, its pastoral simplicity, do not enter into the composition of the French "derangement." But it is not to be wondered at. The French mind never could understand our great dramatist; and of all his plays this delicious story, this sweetest flower, this purest gem in Shakspeare's coronet, is the least adapted to the false glitter, shallow sentiment, and factitious philosophy of the French drama.

—TOWN talk in most circles turns upon matters dramatic and operatic; the new season at the Academy of Music, under Maretzek, and what will come of it; the new theatre driving ahead so fast for Laura Keene, with speculations as to what it will be like, and what sort of dishes will be served up; the Metropolitan, under Burton, and its prospects, with who he will have, and what he can get; Wallack's, so certain of being delightful, and up to the reach of its rivals, whatever that may be—all these points, with the incredible fact that the Dramatic Copyright Bill has really become a law, and the hope that men of genius will, in consequence, give us some really good plays, renders the coming theatrical season of unusual interest and general discussion. The Broadway, it is said, comes down at the end of the season. As it appears now undermined and propped up, in consequence of building upon the adjoining lot, it looks as though it might come down at any moment. The only matter of dramatic talk that isn't prospective, is Bourcicault's new play of "Victor and Hortense." Bourcicault is an excellent joiner-workman. He cuts, and joins, and fits to perfection, but the product of his labors is frequently like Joseph's coat, of many colors. "Victor and Hortense" is made up of a rag from Don Cæsar, a slip from The Lady of Lyons, a bit here and a fragment there—the result, a very pleasant, smart, agreeable sort of garment. We should like to see Bourcicault and charming Miss Robertson permanently with us. Bourcicault is thoroughly intellectual, perfect in his knowledge of the stage as an art, and of all men brings the purpose, ambition, attainments and knowledge requisite for the elevation of the drama to its proper and attainable artistic level.

—A SUBJECT of universal talk, in both town and country, is Mr. Everett's splendid oration before the Scientific Convention at Albany. We shall not pause to eulogize it. There is not an epithet in the language that hasn't already been exhausted in its praise; but let us congratulate our countrymen that Edward Everett is now lifted above all the smoke, the stain, the bitterness and malignancy of political strife, into the clear and higher atmosphere of art and science, where his genius shines effulgent and serene. If the fullness of fame belongs to any man at this moment, Edward Everett is he. In oratory, the loftiest of arts, he has successively achieved triumphs of the most complete and enduring kind, and his efforts are destined to immortality, by the side of the finest productions of the Grecian and Roman forum.

The Scientific Convention, altogether, was a success. For a week the public were crammed high with science. Fashion caught it up, and led it a dance; it stalked into every circle; drawing-rooms became suddenly learned; scandal glided trippingly into its abstrusities; beau and belle flirted over it; young misses shook their curls and lisped its biggest phrases; Maretzek and La Grange were temporarily forgotten; fortune-hunters at the watering-places became fossil-hunters; for a week science was the rage. The opera opened—it was shown the back-door, and politely cut.

Among other things demonstrated at the Convention was a theory of the gradual advancement of the Florida reefs to the island of Cuba, and the probable eventual annexation of this Queen of the Antilles to our shores. This certainly would be a realization of the doctrine of "Manifest Destiny" in a way not exactly apprehended at the Ostend Conference. If Nature takes to filibustering in our behalf, we might as well concede the principle of universal rule at once.

LITERARY.

Saratoga, a Tale of 1787, will remind the reader of Cooper. It is modelled upon the novels of that distinguished author, without possessing much of their genius. It is absorbing in interest, almost intensely so, and is certain of carrying those who commence it, through to the end. In descriptive passages, it is remarkably fine; but the invention of the author appears to have exhausted itself upon the character of Wild Jake, and the incidents appertaining to him. Around this character a wild fascination is thrown, but the author's genius never gets beyond him. In no other character is there any successful individuality. Brigham and McCary are weak dilutions of Cooper's backswoodmen; Catfoot and Joe we have had over and over again; and the two young lady heroines are exactly what Cooper's heroines always are—very uninteresting, prosy, sedate, overwise young women. This is pretty much the case, also, with the hero, and one keeps wondering how anybody could fall in love with him, or he with anybody. The whole love part, indeed, is weakly managed. It is an attempt to involve that which will not be involved; and, notwithstanding all the efforts of the author to create a satisfactory difficulty, the clouds that arise are perversely transparent, and do not agitate the reader for a single instant. In the conduct of his plot, the author sometimes evinces a lack of ingenuity. You see the "puppet's dallying." The wires that move the scenes are clumsily exposed. Events are continually brought about from the sheer necessity of the plot—forced and strained, to meet the exigencies of the story. But the author depicts with great vividness: he paints with bold, strong colors. His style is of crystal transparency; his incidents, graphic and startling, crowd thickly upon each other, and the reader hurries on from page to page, rapt, eager, and sometimes with 'bated breath. If the first production of a new author, it deserves great credit. (W. P. Fetridge & Co.)

—The second portion of *The Angel in the House*, under the title of *The Espousals*, has just been issued by Ticknor & Fields, of Boston. Of the "Betrothal," we spoke in high praise in our July issue, and we are glad to discover in the concluding portion of the poem, the same compact felicity of expression, and happy analysis of emotion, the same delicacy and sweetness, and successful wedding of noble poetry to simple things, which rendered "The Betrothal" famous at a bound. It would please us exceedingly, if our space permitted it, to cull some of the many gems of feeling, fancy, and thought, which are so richly strewn through the pages of this poem, and present them to the reader as justification of our high commendation; but we must content ourself in saying, that we have drawn deep draughts of pleasure from its perusal; that in purity, exquisite grace, delicacy and beauty, we cannot consider any modern production its equal. It is not a passionate nor an emotional poem. It does not reach all our capabilities of feeling and passion, but gliding smoothly over a calm and transparent stream, sounds the depths of joy and happiness. It depicts simply the felicities of a successful love. It is the story of a summer's day, with light and feathery clouds chasing over its calm and stormless blue.

—*The Baked Head*, and other Tales, need not alarm our readers. The matter is not near so terrible as the name might imply to a nervous imagination. The volume is a collection of Tales, being the second issue of "Putnam's Library of Choice Stories," put together in a neat form, and selected with fine taste and good judgment. Many of the stories come from "Household Words," which is sufficient assurance of their excellence. (G. P. Putnam & Co.)

—T. B. Peterson has published a new, complete, and uniform edition of the novels of Mrs. Lee Hentz. The novels of Mrs. Hentz possess considerable interest. Her circle of admirers will welcome this neat and satisfactory edition of her works.

—*Kate Coventry, an Autobiography*, is a spirited, dashing, and highly interesting reprint from Fraser's Magazine. Kate Coventry is a sort of Lady Gay Spanker, as far as fondness for hunting and high-blooded horses are concerned, and the story is made up principally of her horseback adventures, and certain love difficulties between two rival suitors. She writes as she rides, boldly, with a free rein, and an easy seat. The little episode of the "Dangerfield Ghost," is startling and dramatic. (Jewett & Co.)

—A sketch of the Ecclesiastical History of the Catholic Church in the United States, has been published by Dunigan & Brother, of this city. It is a translation, with additions, from a French work by Henry de Courcy. It appears to appeal more directly to our French residents than to any other class, the work having been prepared for the public of France, the author's interest in the Catholic religion in this country arising from his connection with an ancient French Canadian family, and his descent from officers of the French navy who enlisted themselves under our flag during the Revolution. The need of a work of the kind has long existed, and this appears to supply the want with ability.

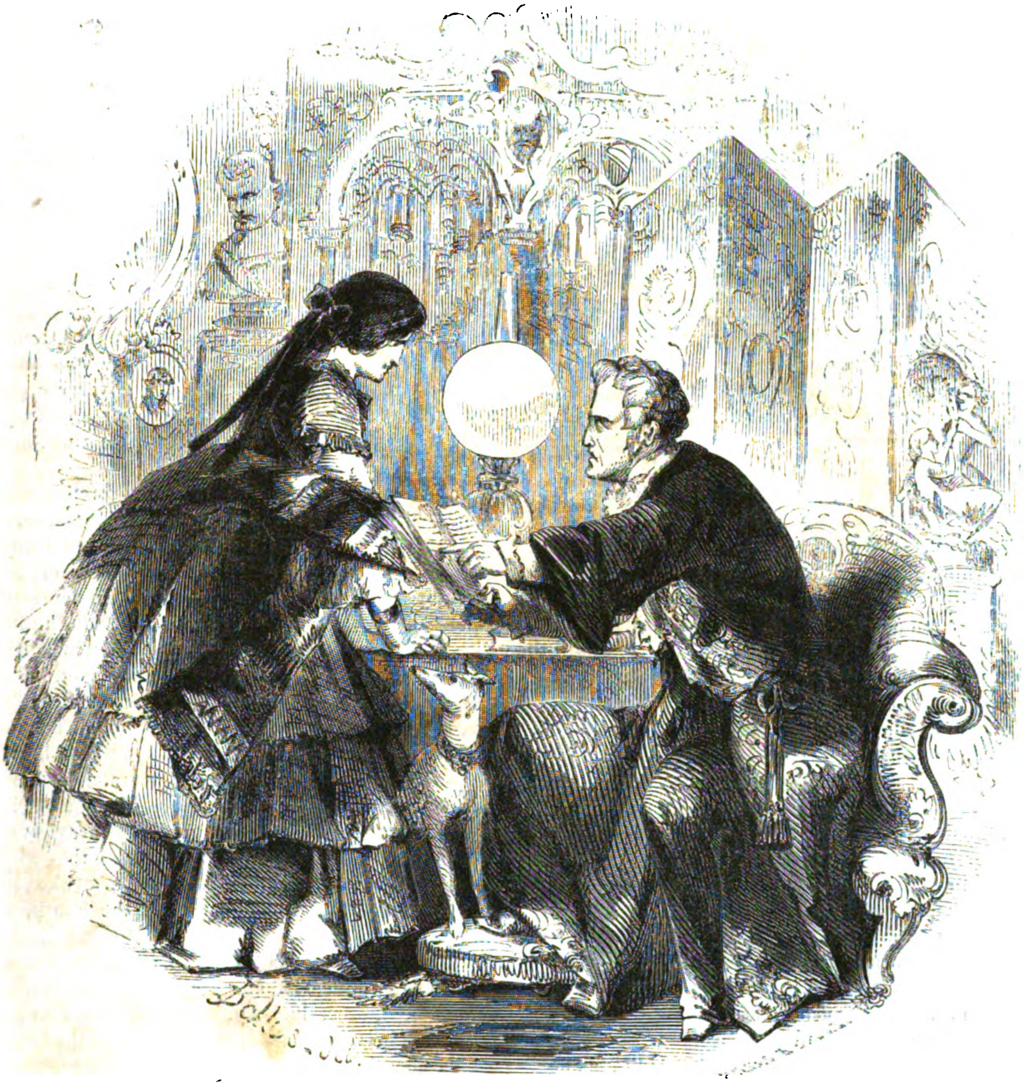
—French & Co., of Boston, are just issuing a new edition of Walter March's "Shoepac Recollections," first published a few months ago. Many of our readers may not have read this charming novel—if so, let them not fail to do it. They will find it a delightful picture of American life upon the Canadian frontier; full of pictures delicately limned; of humor exquisitely touched; of character finely shaded—a fresh, spirited, true, and almost perfect book.

The same author will issue early in October a new work, with the title, "Facta, an Army Memoir." It will be a picture of Army Life by land and sea—graphic, finely touched, full of spirit and power, no reader of "Shoepac Recollections" can doubt.

—*Life in the Itinerancy*, is a history of the toils and triumphs of the Itinerancy, purporting to be based upon incidents of actual occurrence, in which neither the shady nor the sunny side is depicted, but that faithful intermingling of sunshine and shadow which characterizes the realities of not only life in the ministry, but all other kinds of life whatever. It appears to be a well written, conscientious, interesting volume, with no very high order of literary merit either aspired to or reached. (Miller, Orton & Mulligan.)

MRS. STEPHENS' NEW MONTHLY.

NOVEMBER, 1856.



LOST JEWELS.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

CHAPTER IX.—THE HILL-SIDE HOUSE.

James Harrington left the breakfast-table with a restless desire to be alone in the free air. He had not slept during the night, but spent the silent hours in thought, which filled both his heart and brain with excitement. The deep tenderness warred terribly against the strong moral force of his nature, but only as the

* Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S., for the Southern District of New York.

quick tempests of summer strewn against a rock, beating down all the beautiful wild blossoms and moss upon its surface, but leaving it immovable as ever.

As he went forth from the breakfast-room, Ralph passed him, looking restless and anxious.

"Brother James! Brother James!" he said, "I wish to speak with you very much, but not now. I have no heart to say anything just yet!"

James smiled, very gravely, but with a look of gentle patience, that told how completely his strong passions were held in control. Few men in his excited state would have proved so thoughtful of others; for he had no idea that Ralph had any more important subject to consult him about, than some shooting excursion in the hills, or a horseback ride with Lina.

"I am going out for an hour or two," he said; "I have been suffering with headache all night. The air seems close to me indoors. After I come back, will that be time enough, Ralph?"

"I don't know. Yes, of course it will—there is no hurry," answered the impetuous boy, "only I'm so vexed and troubled just now."

"Well, come up to my room. It does not matter much if I go or not—this miserable headache will not probably be driven away."

"No, I can wait. You ought to ride out. How pale you are! Why, your face is quite changed! Indeed, brother James, I will not speak another word till you get back. I wonder what has come over us all this morning. Poor mother ill—the General out of sorts—you with a headache, and I, yes, I may as well own up—I have got something so near heart-sickness here, that—but never mind—I'll shake it off, or know the reason why. But one word, James, did you ever think my mother an illiberal woman?"

"Illiberal, Ralph? Your mother!"

"Well, I mean this. Is she a woman to reject beauty and worth, and everything estimable, because—" James Harrington cut the question short by laying a hand on his brother's shoulder somewhat heavily.

"Your mother, Ralph, is a woman so much above question in all her actions and motives, that even these half-doubts are sacrilegious in her son."

The color rushed up to Ralph's forehead. First he had lost confidence in Lina—now, in his mother.

"If you have a doubt of your mother, speak it to her," said James more gently, as he drew on his riding gloves. "After that, I will talk with you!"

"I wonder what has come over me—James is offended; I never saw him so grave before," muttered Ralph, as his brother moved down the hall.

"Everything goes wrong. Even Fair Star started, as if she would spring at me, when I looked in to see if my mother was up. I will put an end to this!"

Thus half-passionately, half in thought, he went in search of Lina.

James Harrington mounted his horse and rode away. He wanted the clear air and freedom of expanse, motion, anything that would distract his thoughts, and bring back the self-control that had almost departed from him. He rode at random along the highway leading to the city, down cross roads and by the shore, sometimes at a sharp gallop, sometimes giving his well-trained horse the head, till both steed and rider flashed like an arrow between the stooping branches.

In this wild way he rode, unconscious of his course, and without any absolute object, save free air and that rapid motion which harmonizes so well with turbulent feelings. The horse took his own way up hill, along shore, up hill again, till all at once he came out on a green shelf in the hills, upon which a single dwelling stood.

He drew up his horse suddenly, for there a little way from the house and some distance before him, stood two women in eager conversation. One had her back toward him, but her left hand was in sight, and in it was an open book, with its leaves fluttering in the wind. The air and dress of this person reminded him so forcibly of Lina's governess, that he remained a moment looking earnestly that way; not that her presence on the hill would have been particularly remarkable, for on glancing around he recognized by its position, that her mother's house must be in that neighborhood. But that very morning he had seen the governess passing toward Mrs. Harrington's room, and her appearance in both these places so nearly at the same time, aroused his curiosity, not to say suspicion.

But the object that struck him most forcibly was the female with whom she seemed to be conversing. The stately person, the picturesque costume, composed entirely of rich warm colors, the eager expression of features that must once have been eminently handsome—above all, the air of almost ferocious authority, with which she was evidently speaking, struck him as strangely out of place in that solitary spot. Beyond this, he felt a vague impression, impalpable and formless, of some connection between that woman and former events of his own life. It might have been her dress so foreign to the place, or her humble mode of life. The Madras kerchief, folded in a turban over the black hair falling down each side of her face in the heaviest waves of rippling jet, and the massive earrings that gleamed beneath, were in themselves calculated to awake remembrances of an early youth spent in the South, where this picturesque costume was common among the slaves; but the woman's face fascinated his gaze more than her general appearance. Some recollection too vague for embodiment, arose like a mist on his brain so powerfully, that he was unconscious of the time thus spent in gazing upon her.

At last the woman gave a quick glance toward him, and darting forward, snatched at the book in her companion's hand, talking rapidly.

There was some resistance—an attempt to ward her off—but the book was at last yielded to her impetuosity. He saw it, gathered up under the woman's arm, concealed by the folds of an orange-colored scarf, overrun with a pattern of many gorgeous colors, which she wore, and carried into the house.

Then the person whose back had been toward him, turned and looked that way. It was Agnes Barker. She saw him, evidently without much surprise, and turning, rather leisurely walked that way, as if it had been the most natural thing in the world to see him there.

"Oh, Mr. Harrington," she said, coming close to his horse, picking the burs from her dress as she moved along, "can it be possible that you have only reached this point now? I left home half an hour after you rode away—on foot, too, and am almost here before you."

Harrington did not answer, except with a grave bow, but looked at her searchingly from head to foot.

"Yes," she continued, dragging her veil forward, "I found a rough walk after the storm, everything is so wet and gloomy. The only dry spot upon the shore was around the old cedar, where we had that rather interesting scene last night."

A quiet smile stole over Harrington's lip. "Indeed," he said, "I must have ridden at a snail's pace, to let you reach this spot before me—especially if the entire walk was beguiled by the book I just saw you surrender!"

A faint flush stole over Agnes Barker's forehead, and for an instant her eyes fell; then she looked up again with the pretty deprecating glance of one who had been caught in a meritorious act, which her modesty disclaimed.

"Oh, you must not think me quite insane, Mr. Harrington, if I did bring out my sketch-book, in hopes of stealing some of the beautiful autumn tints from these masses of foliage. My good nurse has just been scolding me for sitting upon the damp ground, forgetting my shawl behind, and all that. As a punishment, she has carried off my poor book, and threatens to burn it. I have been very imprudent, and very indecorous, you will say," she added, glancing at her dress, with a faint laugh, "but, no doubt my caprice is sufficiently punished by this time; for, if that access of smoke means anything, my poor sketch-book is ashes now."

She spoke a little rapidly, as one does in a fever, but otherwise her manner was the perfection of modest innocence. Indeed, there was no appearance of confusion, which the derangement of her dress was not quite sufficient to account for.

"Well, you come in and rest awhile?" she said at last, casting a soft glance upward from her dress. "My good mammy may not be prepared for such company, but she will make you welcome."

"Yes," said Harrington, struck by a sudden wish to see more of the woman who had interested him so much, "I will go in, thank you!"

She turned, as if to precede him, but throwing his bridle over a sapling, he walked rapidly forward, and overtook her just before she entered the house. The door was partly open. Agnes turned upon the threshold.

"I know that my poor book is burned, without asking," she said, in a voice much louder than usual. "You have no idea, Mr. Harrington, how careful nurse is of my health. Do not be surprised if she is very angry with me!"

"It is very difficult to surprise me with anything," said Harrington, drawing nearer to the door, through which he saw glimpses of orange-colored drapery disappearing into an inner room.

"You must not say that, for I had expected some surprise at the view from this particular point," she answered, evidently wishing to detain him on the door step.

"Yes, it is very fine; but you will find the wind rather keen. Allow me."

Harrington pushed the door wide open, and Agnes was obliged to pass into the apartment beyond. She seemed relieved to find it empty, and when her guest looked toward the opposite door, observed; "I am in disgrace, you see, mammy has shut herself up."

"And yet I have some desire to see her, if it were only to excuse the fright we gave her last night, by allowing you to enter without knocking."

"Oh, she did not mind it in the least. It was nothing, I assure you."

"Still I would like to speak with her."

Agnes grew pale about the lips, a sign of emotion that did not escape her guest; but it passed off in an instant, and she was slowly approaching the inner door, when it opened, and the object of their conversation presented herself.

Harrington was, indeed, surprised. She was evidently ten years older than she had appeared at a distance, and, though that seemed an impossibility, darker too. The Madras kerchief certainly had been refolded since her return to the house, for it came low upon the forehead, and the hair visible beneath it was thickly scattered with white. She stooped somewhat, and her gait was slow, almost shuffling. Not a vestige of the imperious air that had rendered her so picturesque a few minutes before, remained. She appeared before him simply as a commonplace mulatto woman of rather more than middle age, who might have been an upper house servant in her day, but nothing more. On closer inspection, even the orange-tinted shawl was soiled and held around her person in a slovenish manner, as rich cast-off garments usually are by the servants who inherit them.

At first, Harrington would not believe that this was the same woman whose appearance had made so deep an impression on him, for a heavy sort of sluggishness, both of thought and feeling, lay on her features, while those that had aroused his attention so keenly, were active and full of intelligence. The woman did not sit down, but stood by the open door, looking stupidly at Agnes Barker, as if waiting for some command.

"Well, Miss Agnes, I'se here, what does the master please to want?"

It was rather difficult for James Harrington, self-possessed as he was, to answer that question. The woman had taken him by surprise. Her appearance was so completely that of a common-place servant, that he was silenced by the very surprise she had given him. But for her dress, he would not have believed in her identity with the person he had seen in the open air, and that was worn with a slovenliness altogether unlike the careless ease remarkable in the person whom she represented, without conveying an impression of absolute identity.

Harrington had spent his early life in the South, and was at no loss to comprehend the peculiar class to which this woman belonged. He answered her quietly, but still with suspicion: "Nothing, aunty, except that you will oblige me with a glass of water."

The woman shuffled across the room, and brought him some water, which she placed scrupulously on a plate, by way of waiter, before presenting it. Her air—the loose, indolent gait, like that of a leopard moving sleepily around its lair—convinced him that she was nothing more than a common household slave, out of place in her cold, and almost poverty-stricken northern home. He drank the water she gave him, and handing back the glass, inquired if she did not feel lonely and chilled by the cold climate?

"I'se allus warm and comfortable where dat ere chile is," said the woman, looking at Agnes, "any place 'pears like home when she's by, and I 'xpect she feels like dat where old aunty is, if she is poor."

"She is happy in having one faithful friend," answered Harrington, more and more satisfied that the woman was simply what she seemed.

A strange smile quivered for a moment around Agnes Barker's lip, but as Harrington turned his glance that way, it subsided into a look of gentle humility.

"You will inform the ladies that I shall return to-night. It proved a chilly day for sketching, and finding myself nearer my own home than the mansion-house, I stole a few moments for poor, old, lonesome mammy here."

Harrington had arisen as she commenced speaking, and with a grave bend of the head, promised to convey her message.

The two women watched him as he crossed the rude garden, and mounted his horse; then drawing hurriedly back into the house, they closed the door.

"What could have brought him here? Did she send him?" inquired the slave-woman anxiously, and all at once assuming the haughty air natural to her, while a keen intelligence came to her features.

"No," answered Agnes, "she is ill in bed; I am sure she has not seen him this morning. It must have been accident that brought him in this direction."

The slave-woman looked searchingly in the girl's face. "Did he know that you came this way?"

"That is impossible."

"It should not be impossible. You have been months in his house, Agnes—I did not expect so little progress."

Agnes was annoyed, and put aside the subject with an impatient gesture.

"What have you been doing, girl?" persisted the woman, "remember your own destiny is in this more than mine."

"But why select this man so difficult of access, so unattainable?"

"Because he has wealth and power."

"There is some other reason, mother. Let me know it!"

"Well, know it, then—I believe that woman loves him—I know that she loved him once."

"I know that she loves him *yet*," said Agnes, with a sinister smile. "For I witnessed a scene last night, when she came too after they had dragged her from the water, which settled that in my mind perfectly; but what do you care for that? How will it help us?"

"What do I care for that—I—I—what does the hungry man care for food, or the thirsty one for water? What do I care, child? Listen: I hate that woman—from my soul I hate her!"

"Then it was hatred of her, not love for me, that brought us here!"

"It was both, Agnes—do not doubt it. When I avenge the wrongs of my life on her, you must be a gainer."

"Mother, I do not understand you."

"It is not necessary; obey me, that is enough."

"But, how has Mrs. Harrington wronged you?"

"How has she wronged me, Agnes! Be quiet, I am not to be questioned in this way."

"But mother, I am no longer a child to be used blindly. You have objects which I do not comprehend—motives which are so rigidly concealed that I, who am to help work them out, grope constantly in the dark. I am told to listen, watch, work, even steal, and am left ignorant of the end to be accomplished."

"Have I not told you that it is your marriage with Mr. James Harrington, the real owner of all the property which his father is supposed to possess? Am I not working to make you the richest lady of the North, the wife of a man whom all other men hold in reverence; and in this am I not securing the dearest and sweetest vengeance that mortal ever tasted?"

"But I do not think Mr. Harrington cares for me, or ever will."

"What have you been doing, then?" cried the woman fiercely. "You have beauty, or, if not that, something far more powerful—that subtle magnetism which all men feel a thousand times more forcibly, deep knowledge; for have I not taught you what human hearts are worth, and how to dissect them, leaf by leaf? You have coolness, self-control, and passion when it is wanted. Have I not trained you from the cradle for this one object, and dare you talk of its failure?"

"Mamma, let us understand each other. Cannot we accomplish the same thing, and both be gratified? I do not love Mr. James Harrington, but there is one of the name that I do love, heart and soul."

"And who is that?" demanded the woman sharply, and her black eyes caught fire from the anger within her.

"It is the other son, Ralph Harrington."

How hard and defiant was the voice in which Agnes Barker said this—a young girl expressing her first love without a blush, and with that air of cold-blooded defiance. It was terrible!

"Ralph Harrington, he is *her* son and a beggar!" cried the woman bitterly.

"I do not understand what force may lie in the first objection, and I do not believe in the second. Ralph cannot be a beggar while his brother holds so much wealth; at any rate, I love him."

"Love, girl! What have you to do with this sweet poison? The thing Love is not in your destiny."

"It is, though, and shall control it," replied Agnes, with the same half-insolent tone; for it seemed to be a relief for this young girl to act out spontaneously the evil of her nature, and she appeared to enjoy the kindling anger of her mother, if that slave woman was her mother, with vicious relish.

The woman walked close to the insolent girl, with her hand clenched, and her her lips pressed firmly together.

"Agnes, Agnes—you cannot know how much rests on you—how great a revenge your obstinacy may baffle."

"I know that I love Ralph Harrington, and if it will comfort you to hear it, he does not love me," answered the girl with a burning glow in either cheek.

"Oh, you have come back again—it is my blood on fire in your cheeks. I have no fear of you, Agnes. That blood grows strong with age like old wine, and soon learns to give hatred for unanswered love. I can trust the blood."

"But he shall love me, mother, or, at any rate, no one else shall have what he withholds from me."

"Be still, Agnes, do not make me angry again. You and I must work together. Tell me, did you succeed in quieting General Harrington's inquiries regarding the letters of recommendation?"

"Did I succeed?" answered Agnes, with a smile that crept over her young lips like a viper. "The old General is more pliable than the sons. Oh, yes, when he began questioning me of the whereabouts of our kind friends who think so much of us, you know, I put forth all the accomplishments you have taught me, and wiled him from the subject in no time. You have just questioned my beauty, mother. I doubt if he did then, for his eyes were not off my face a moment. What fine eyes the old gentleman has, though! I think it would be easier to obey you in that quarter than the other."

As she uttered the last words with a reckless lift of the head, the slave-woman made a spring at her, and grasping the scornfully uplifted shoulder, bent her face —which was that of a fiend—close to the young girl's ear: "Beware, girl, beware!" she whispered, "you are treading among adders."

"I think you are crazy, mother," was the contemptuous reply, as Agnes released her shoulder from the gripe of that fierce hand. "My shoulder will be black and blue after this, and all for a joke about a conceited old gentleman whom we are both taking in. Did you not tell me to delude him off the subject if he mentioned those letters of recommendation again?"

The woman did not answer, but stood bending forward as if ashamed of her violence, but yet with a gleam of rage lingering in her black eyes.

"Have you done?" said Agnes, arranging her velvet sacque, which had been torn from its buttons in front, by the rude handling she had received.

"You must not speak in that way again," answered the old woman in a low voice, "I did not mean to hurt you, child, but General Harrington is not a man for girls like you to joke about."

"This is consistent, upon my word," answered the girl with a short scornful laugh. "You teach me to delude the old gentleman into a half-flirtation. He meets me in the grounds—begins to ask about the persons from whom we obtained those precious recommendations, and when I attempt to escape the subject, persists in walking by me till I led him a merry dance up the steepest hill that could be found, and left him there out of breath, and in the midst of a protestation that I was the loveliest person he had ever seen. Loveliest—no, that was not it—the most bewitching creature! these were the last words I remember, for that moment Benson's boat hove in sight, and there sat madam looking fairly at us. If they had been a moment later, I'm quite sure the old fellow would have been down upon his knees in the dead leaves.

The slave-woman listened to this flippant speech in cold silence. She was endowed with a powerful will, matched with pride that was almost satanic. She saw the malicious pleasure with which Agnes said all this, and would not gratify it by a single glance. With all her wicked craft, the young girl was no match for the woman.

"You have acted unwisely," she said with wonderful self-command; "never trifle with side issues when they can possibly interfere with the main object. I wished to evade General Harrington's close scrutiny into our antecedents; to soothe the lion, not goad him. Be careful of this a second time!"

How smooth and calmly she spoke! You would not have believed her the same woman who had sprung upon her daughter so like a tiger only a few moments before. Even Agnes looked upon her with amazement.

"Mother," she said, "tell me what you are at—trust me, and I will help you heart and soul."

"What! even to the giving up of this new-born love?"

"Even to that, if I can be convinced of its necessity."

"I will trust you."

"Wholly—entirely?"

"Entirely!"

The girl threw her arms around that singular woman, their lips met, and the subtle force of one heart kindled and burned in the bosom of the other.

"Tell me everything, mother!"

"I will. But first, let us read Mabel Harrington's journal, it will prepare you for the rest."

They opened the stolen book, and sat down together so close that their arms were interlaced, and their cheeks touched as they read.

It was a terrible picture, that meagre, dimly-lighted room, the tree-boughs waving against the window, their leaves vocal with the last sob of the storm, and those two women with their keen evil faces, their lips parted with eagerness, and their eyes gleaming darkly, as they drank up the secrets of poor Mabel Harrington's life.

CHAPTER X.

OLD HEADS AND YOUNG HEARTS.

General Harrington spent the entire day at home. After the rather uncomfortable breakfast we have already described, he went to his library, dissatisfied and moody. All day he was disposed to be restless and dissatisfied with his books, as he had been with the appointments of his morning meal. Indignant with his whole household, for not being on the alert to amuse him, he declined going down to dinner; but ordering some choicely cooked birds and a bottle of champagne in his own room, had amused his rather fastidious appetite with these delicacies, while he still luxuriated in his dressing-gown, and read snatches from a new book of poems that had interested him for the moment.

This rather pleasant occupation wiled away an hour, when he was interrupted by a knock at the door. Lifting his eyes from the book, the General said, "Come in," rather hastily, for the knock had broken into one of the finest passages of the poem, and General Harrington detested interruptions of any kind, either in a mental or sensual enjoyment.

"Come in!"

The General was a good deal astonished when his son Ralph opened the door, and stood before him with an air of awkward constraint, that would certainly have secured him a reprimand had he not been the first to speak.

"Father!"

General Harrington gave an impatient wave of the hand.

"Young gentleman," he said, "how often am I to remind you that the use of the paternal title after childhood is offensive. Can't you call me General Harrington, sir, as other people do? A handsome young fellow six feet high should learn to forget the nursery. Sit down, sir, sit down and converse like a gentleman, if you have anything to say."

The blood rose warmly in Ralph's face, not that he was angry or surprised, but it seemed impossible to open his warm heart to the man before him.

"Well then, General," he said, with a troubled smile, "I—I've been getting into—into——"

"Not into debt, I trust," said the General, folding the skirts of the Turkish dressing-gown over his knees, and smoothing the silken folds with his hand, but speaking with a degree of genuine bitterness, "because, if that's it, you had better go to James at once—he is the millionaire. I am not much better than his pensioner myself—thanks to the caprices of a woman!"

"It is not that," answered Ralph, with an effort which sent the blood crimsoning to his temples, "though money may have something to do with it in time. The truth is, General, I have been in love with Lina all my life, and never found it out till yesterday."

General Harrington gave the youth a look from under his bent brows, that made the young man shrink back in his chair, but in a moment the unpleasant expression went off, and a quiet smile stole over the old man's lip.

"Oh, you will get over that, Ralph. It isn't worth being angry about. Of course, you will get over it. I think this is a first love, hey!"

"The first and last with me, fath—General."

"Yes, yes, of course—I think I remember feeling a little in the same way at your age. It won't be serious —these things never are!"

"But I am very serious. I have told her all about it. My honor is pledged."

The young man—who, by the way, really seemed a mere boy yet to his father—was going on with some vehemence, but he was coldly cut short by the General, who sat regarding his enthusiasm with a most provoking smile.

"Of course, I supposed so—eternal constancy and devotion on both sides! Very well, what can I do about it?"

"Oh, father, I beg your pardon—but you can do everything. Your free, hearty consent is all I ask—and if you would be so kind as to exert a little influence with mother."

"Then you have told this to her, before coming to me," said the General, and his brow darkened.

"No, sir, I have spoken to no one but Lina. It was my duty to come to you first, and I am here."

"That is better; but how do you know that Mrs. Harrington will disapprove of your caprice for her protégée, if no one has spoken to her on the subject?"

"I believe, sir, that Lina said something about it; but before she could be very definite, my mother fainted. This frightened my—I mean, it terrified poor Lina, and she had no courage to go on; so we were in hopes, sir, that you would be so good."

The General sat gazing upon the handsome face of his son, with the air of a person revolving some thought rapidly in his mind. At last, his cold eyes brightened, and a smile crept over his mouth.

"It was very right to come here first, Ralph, and remember your duty goes no farther. I will only consent to your marrying this girl at all, on condition that you, neither of you, ever speak on the subject to any one. You are both very young, and a year or two hence will be time enough for a decision; but I will have no gossip about the matter. Above all, my son James must be left entirely uncommitted. I only consent to let this fancy have a proper trial. If it proves serious, of course the whole family will be informed; but till then I must have your promise not to speak of it to any one not already informed?"

The young man drew close to his father, and taking his hand, kissed it.

"I promise, father!"

The General was pleased with the homage and grace of this action, and rising, placed a hand on Ralph's shoulder, more cordially than he had done in years.

"Are you sure she cares for you, Ralph? I have seen nothing to suggest the idea."

"I think, indeed I am quite certain that she does not like any one else near so much," answered the young man, reluctant to compromise Lina's delicacy by a broader confession.

"Young men are always confident," said the General with a bland smile. "I think that faith in woman was the first delusion that I gave up. Still it is pleasant while it lasts. Heaven forbid that I should brush the bloom from your grapes, my boy. So you really think that mamma's little protégée knows her own mind, and that my son knows his?"

A pang came to the ardent heart of the youth as he listened. Another golden thread snapped under the cold-blooded worldliness of that crafty old man.

General Harrington looked in his face, and analyzed the play of those handsome features, exactly as he had tasted the game-birds and champagne a half hour before. The same relish was in both enjoyments, only one was the epicureanism of a mind that found pleasure in dissecting a young heart, and the other, quite as important to him, was a delicious sensuality.

And Ralph stood under this scrutiny with a cloud on his fine brow and a faint quiver of the lip. It was agony to think of Lina without perfect confidence in her affection for himself. Yet he was so young, and his father had seen so much. If he found no evidence of Lina's attachment to himself, it must be that all was a delusion.

The old man read these thoughts, and took upon himself a gentle air of composure.

"These things often happen when young people are thrown together in the same house, Ralph. It is a pleasant dream. Both parties wake up, and there is no harm done. Don't take the thing to heart, it isn't worth while."

"Then you think, sir, she really does not care for me?"

With all his worldliness, the old man could hardly withstand the appeal of those magnificent eyes, for Ralph possessed the beautiful charm of deep feeling, without a particle of self-conceit. He began to wonder how Lina ever could have fancied him, and to grieve over the delusion.

"It is strange," said the General, as if musing with himself, "it is strange, but these very young creatures seldom do give their first preferences to persons of corresponding age. Girls love to look up to men with reverence. It is really wonderful!"

The young man started, fire flashed into his eyes, and for an instant he was breathless.

"You—you cannot mean that, Lina—*my* Lina loves some one else!" he said, speaking rapidly—"Who has she known but me, and—and——?" He stopped short, looking wistfully at his father.

"You and my son James? No one, certainly, no one."

"Brother James! oh, father."

"But you are satisfied that he loves you, and that is enough," answered the General, waving his hand as if tired of the discussion. It is decided that this whole subject rests between ourselves. Come to me a year, nay, six months from now, and if you desire it, then, I will not be hard with you."

The General seated himself as he spoke, and resumed his book with a gentle wave of the hand. Ralph lent his head partly in submission, partly to conceal the flush that suppressed tears left about his eyes and went out, leaving the first pure jewel of his heart in that old man's hands.

The twilight had crept on during this conversation. General Harrington rang the bell for a servant to remove the silver tray on which his dinner had been served, and consumed considerable time in directing how the lamp should be placed, in order to protect his eyes as he read. When once more alone, he cast a thought back to his son.

"It will do him good. I wonder now if I, General Harrington, ever was so confiding, so rash, so generous. —for the boy is generous. My son, on whom so much depends, married to that girl! I was almost tempted into a scene with the first mention of it."

With these thoughts floating through his brain, the General leaned back in his chair more discomposed than usual by his late interview, for though his reflections were all worldly and common place, they had a deeper and unexpressed importance hardly recognized by himself.

Again there was a low knock at the door, and again the General bade the intruder come in, rather hastily, for he was in no humor for company! "Miss Barker; Miss Agnes Barker," he said, as that girl presented herself and softly closed the door, "you are too kind—I only regret that this pleasant surprise detects me en déshabillé."

"General Harrington is always General Harrington in any dress—besides, I have a preference for this sort of orientalism."

"You are kind to forgive me, and kinder to allow me the happiness of your presence. Sit down!"

"No," answered the governess, with a look from her black almond-shaped eyes that brought a glow into the old man's cheek deeper than the wine had left. "I found this book open upon Mrs. Harrington's desk. She must have forgotten it there after her fainting fit this morning. I am sure she has no secrets from her husband, and so bring it to you, as it may excite her to be disturbed, and I have no key to her desk."

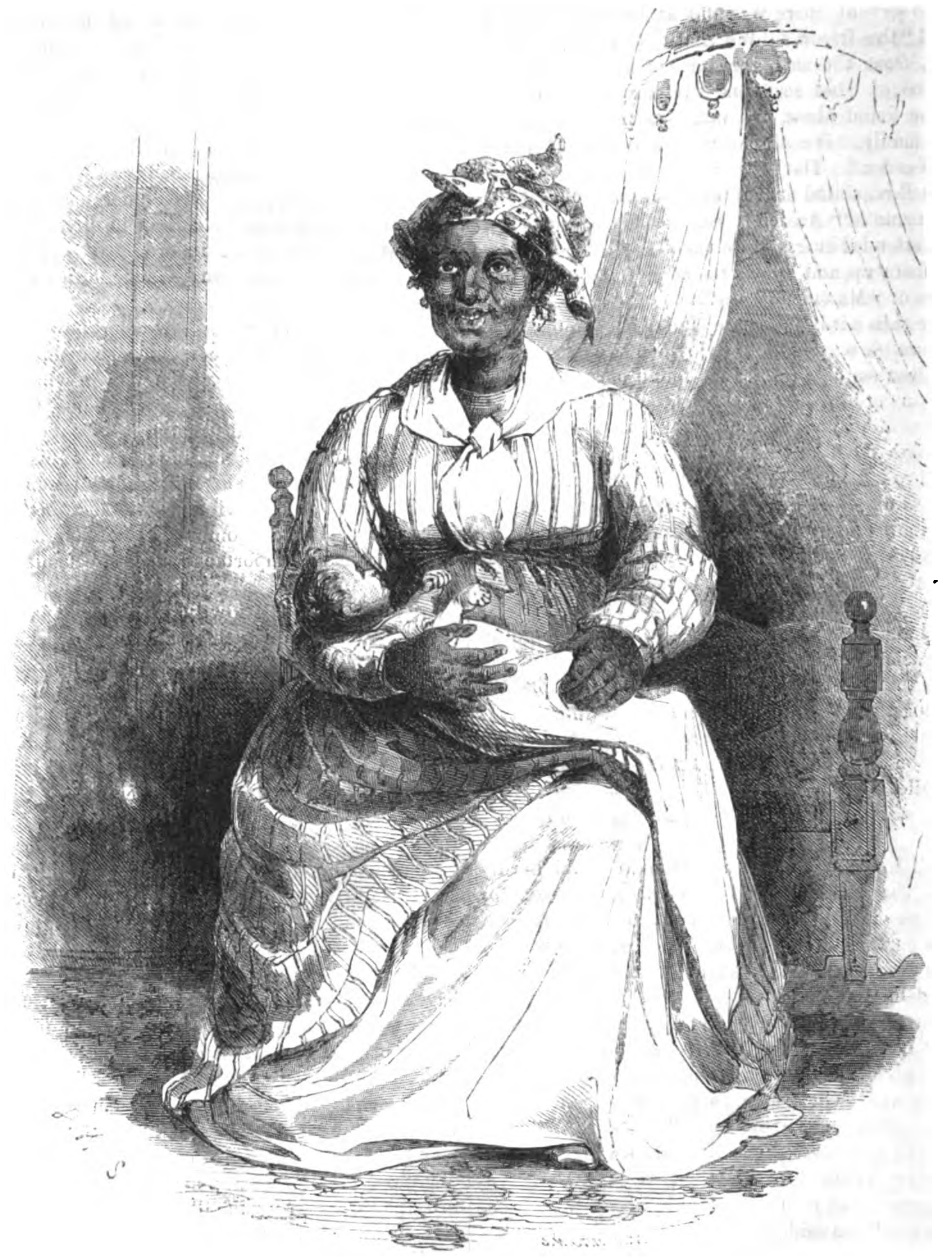
The General reached forth his hand, struck by the vellum binding and jewelled clasp, for he was a connoisseur in such matters, and the effect pleased him.

"What is it?" he said, opening the book and leaning towards the light, "some illuminated missal, I fancy, or rare manuscript. Oh—ha, my lady's journal—let us see."

He had opened the book at random, and with a gratified smile, but directly the expression of his face hardened, and his lips parted with surprise. He turned the open volume toward Agnes, who stood leaning upon the table opposite; placed his finger sternly upon a passage of the writing, and demanded whether she had read it.

"You insult me with the question," said the young lady, drawing herself up, "I did not expect this," and before he could speak Agnes glided from the room.

(To be continued.)



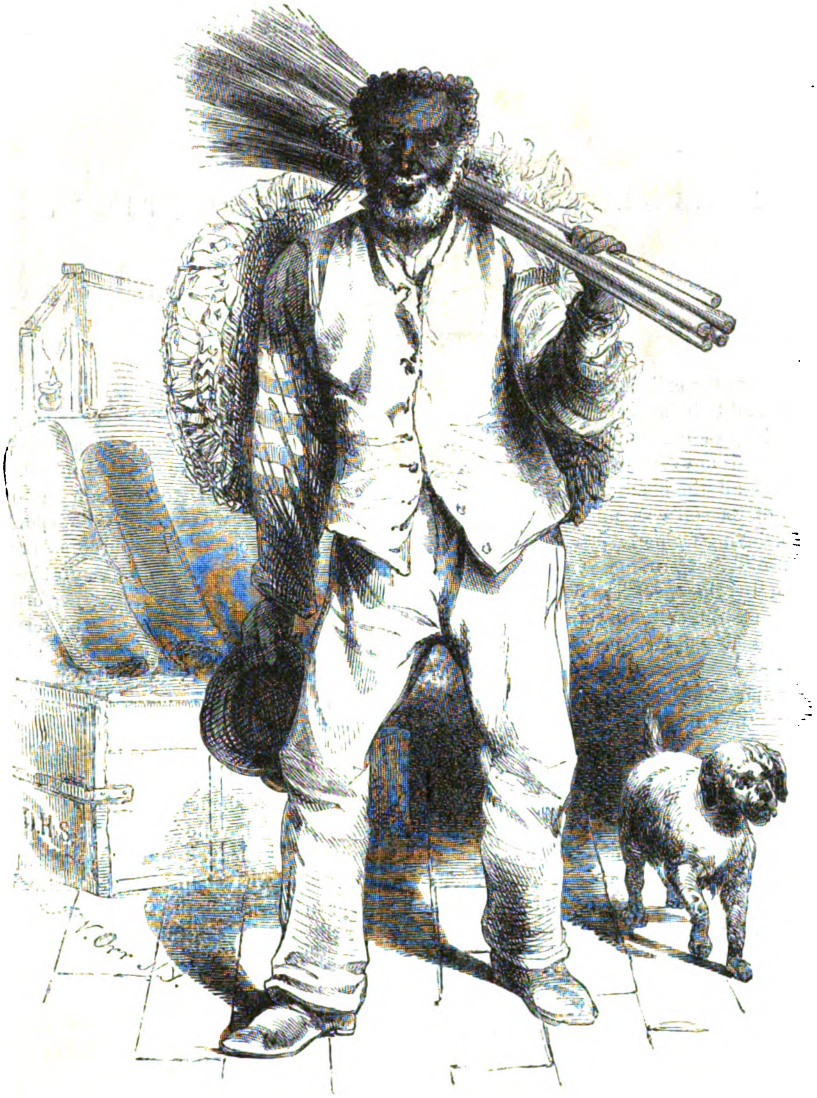
CHARACTERISTIC SKETCHES

FROM THE

SOUTH SIDE OF THE POTOMAC.

"AUNTY," THE NURSE.

The facile pencil of Strother, through "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," under the title of "Virginia Illustrated," has given us the finest sketches of negro character ever delineated by art. The mind that guided that pencil is Virginia born, and the good and the faithful negro, so often to be found under the milder sway of the patriarchal institution, appealed to its purest susceptibilities; and in placing upon the printed page the servant, there was also at the same time delineated "the friend." We have the pleasure of presenting, from the same master hand, two interesting specimens of "old servants," resemblances of which are to be found about the mansion of every old Virginian family. We allude to "The Nurse" and the "Mat Vender." The former is a great personage in every well-regulated family, and generally goes by the general name of "Aunty." She is a faithful old negress that has attended every one of the rising generation from their infancy up, and knows ten thousand pleasing reminiscences of "Master William" or "Mistress Alice," can tell when each put off the baby clothes to assume a more pretentious garb. She knows when the first tooth was cut, the first essay to walk was made, and can give day and date when the little cooing of the infant mouth assumed articulate sound, and oh! prodigious! uttered the magic name of "Aunty." Great indeed is the blessing, in these degenerate days, of one of these faithful old creatures to our household; faithful as the sun, never-tiring, always kind, always enduring, always happy; blessed with a heart overflowing with kindness, and cures for the colic, religious to a fault, and perfect in the preparation of paps—a godsend, indeed, to helpless infancy and just developing childhood. It is "old aunty" who keeps the ghosts out of the bedroom, and sits up with the children winter nights, when the window sashes rattle, and the juvenile imagination suggests that there are "spooks about." It is "old aunty" who can keep the baby still when all ordinary nursing has failed; her



"UNCLE," THE MAT VENDER.

very influence is soporific, and the complaining little incipient humanity, under her influence, wilts into a trans-peaceful bud, or becomes as quiet as if it hung inanimate upon some neighboring tree. Who, that has felt the benign influences of these sable guardians of little folks, does not venerate their appearance, and look upon them as juvenile kindly providences exerted especially to alleviate, and make bearable, the pains and troubles of infantile life? "UNCLE," THE MAT VENDER, is generally an old servant, who, from long service and good character, has won immunity from fixed tasks, and employs his time as he pleases, either sleeping in the sunshine, working in the garden, going on hunting expeditions with the little masters, or, perhaps, more industriously inclined, goes into the manufacturing business, and makes crude articles of household wear, which, though of little value, deludes the good-natured creature that he is not altogether useless in the world, nor altogether dependent on his friends for food and raiment. In the old "Mat Vender," we have the negro "Nestor," who, having grown grey in the service of his "massa," is now allowed to spend the evening of his days in the manner most agreeable to his own notions. While selling the mats and brooms, he gathers up all the absorbing gossip of the day; hence "Uncle Pomp" becomes a great orator; and the solemnity with which his exercitations are pronounced, is not the least salient point of his character. On his return at evening to the patriarchal home, our old negro friend is to be found seated by the kitchen fire, retailing to his delighted audience of brother and sister Cuffees—and very possibly there may be present young "massa," and "missus"—the wonderful results of his outside observations; his oratorical narrative is always listened to with the most reverent attention, and the innocent feeling of profound wisdom which fills the old fellow's breast, is as pleasant to the intelligent listener to contemplate as it is delightful to himself to entertain.

FIRESIDES OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.

THE MYSTERIOUS BROTHERS.

THE portion of country called the Dutch Fork lies between the Broad and Saluda rivers, in South Carolina. It is still inhabited by descendants of its first settlers who were emigrants from every part of Germany. In 1788, the region had all the characteristics of a Dutch colony, and much of its soil was under cultivation by these sturdy, labor-loving farmers.

Being natives of different provinces in the Faderland, the language used by these settlers was various, and sometimes they found difficulty in understanding one another. Their manners and customs were also diverse; but the experience of a few years taught them to vary a little from the habits familiar in their own country, for the sake of accommodating each other in this "wild Indian land"—as they called their new home. The distinctions in dress and living to which many of them had clung, were given up for the simpler habits of a pioneer people.

It is curious, in the luxurious indulgence of modern time as to the table—on which Southern country landholders pride themselves—to see on what frugal fare these primitive worthies lived. Tea or coffee formed no part of the usual morning repast; but on Sunday, the good wife prepared a beverage that might have had a table-spoonful infused into seven or eight gallons. Rolled cakes, or Johnny-cake shortened, were the universal solid material for breakfast, meat of any kind being seldom used. But as a substitute for tea or coffee, a dish of soup, renewed every morning, though composed of the same materials, graced the head of the board. Occasionally, for a change, a pot of mush was prepared, and set on in a large pewter basin, with an opening made in the middle of the savory mess, large enough to contain a quart of sweet milk. Into this was dipped each spoonful of the hot mush by the rosy-cheeked urchins and kinky-headed girls who stood round the oaken table—each furnished with a large pewter spoon, and performing his or her part in the dexterous game of transferring the mush to the milk and then to the mouth, at all sorts of angles and cross purposes. The children of that day were especially fond of this mess, and the women skillful in its preparation.

The dress of the younger females for Sunday, was a petticoat of flax or cotton warp, filled in with woollen yarn of various shades and colors; the prevailing tints being green, red, yellow and blue. The yarn was dyed at home with leaves and flowers gathered from the forest; and weaved in the domestic loom; and the broader and brighter the stripes which ran through the cloth, the more beautiful it was thought to be. The like may now be seen in what are called Duffel blankets.

Over this petticoat a gown was worn, with long or short sleeves, according to the wearer's fancy. The gown was left open in front for the space of half a yard, which opening was covered with a thin gauze apron, allowing the splendid stripes of the under garment to be plainly seen. White stockings and high-heeled shoes, and a man's hat, completed the costume in which these damsels might be seen tripping to church, she who had a lover, walking hand in hand with him. The gallant wore a hunting-shirt or home-made coat, with shorts or knee-breeches as they were called, and cotton stockings or a pair of leggins without stockings, covering the leg to the shoe. The clothing of both sexes was of home-manufacture, for no one among the working-people ever thought of buying raiment at a store. As fashion will reign even in the wildwoods, some articles of dress were in special favor, particularly buckshin breeches, and those who made them plied a profitable trade. The old settlers yet remember Christian Hope—or as he was generally called—Houpt—who earned a respectable livelihood by the manufacture of this article. He was the grandfather of the excellent and much-respected Rev. John C. Hope, whose name is familiar in South Carolina.

While taking a view of the primitive customs of our ancestors, it will not be amiss to describe their mode of courtship and marriage. Washington Irving has mentioned the practice of "bundling" among the New-Englanders; the method was not dissimilar among the Dutch settlers; and although young ladies of the present day may be shocked—our veritable chronicler assures us that departures from strict virtue were then of very, very rare occurrence. The apartment occupied by the young girls of the family had each a square window of somewhat peculiar construction. After the household had retired to rest, when all was profound stillness, the adventurous suitor would climb in at this window, approach the bed where his charmer lay, and stretch himself composedly by her side. She took this intrusion as a common-place piece of gallantry, entered into conversation with him, and they discussed matters of interest till the day began to break, when the lover bade adieu, leaped from the window and was gone. If the maiden to whom his addresses were thus paid, looked with favorable eye on his suit, she promised to marry him, and received from the young man a dollar to clinch the bargain. The next step was to inform the parents, or nearest relatives of the bride; and their consent obtained, his own relations were told of the intended marriage. They immediately went to the bride's family to hold a consultation as to the time of the wedding and the arrangements to be made for it, and then the minister of the congregation was informed—it being his duty to publish the bans from the pulpit three successive Sundays.

The wedding always took place at the house of the bride. On the appointed day the invited guests and acquaintances might be seen mounted on horseback and coming from every direction. Among them, a man previously appointed to the duty of escorting the bride, was called the "bride-leader;" and the two young men, with each a damsel by his side, appeared as attendants. The fiddler came up with his violin under his arm, and each of these officials wore a distinctive badge—a breast-knot of ribbons of various colors. The bridegroom and his groomsman were also gay in crimson ribbons, and the fiddle had scarlet streamers a yard long attached to its neck.

The procession was headed by a person riding a steady horse, and leading that of the musician. When all were ranged in file, two and two, they started—the bride and her leader going next the fiddler, the groom alone, followed by his attendants, and the rest of the company in order. Alighting at the church door, they walked in, the fiddler stepping aside at the entrance and standing still, plying his instrument vigorously, till all were seated in the sacred building—still observing the same order. The minister then went into the pulpit and preached a sermon suited to the occasion. He then performed the ceremony of marriage, and dismissed the assembly with a benediction, which was scarcely uttered when the fiddle was again heard at the door. The party returned in the same form as before, except that the husband took the precedence, while the wife followed in token of her submission thenceforward. There was then a race among some of the best-mounted young men for "the bride's bottle," which was taken by the fleetest horse.

After the party had returned to the house, the bride and her leader lead the festivities by dancing three Dutch dances, at the end of which the official delivered the lady to her husband to dance the same number with him; he returning her, when they were finished, to dance again with the leader.

The dancing then became general, and continued till dinner.

The wedding-feast consisted of rice soup and chicken, sour krout and bacon, roast beef and pork, baked fowl and chicken-pies; these last a different article and called by a different name from the modern manufacture. While the repast continued, those of the men who were not too intently occupied, would watch the opportunity to dodge under the table and slip off one of the bride's shoes. Whoever was so fortunate as to obtain the prize, set it up, after dinner, to the highest bidder, who, of course, was the leader, and who was responsible for any loss or injury sustained that day by the bride. Sometimes, as a punishment for carelessness on his part, its price was run up as high as five dollars.

Over the bride's head, as she sat at the table, a huge cake was suspended from one of the joists of the house. It was decorated with ribbons of all colors and artificial flowers woven into a wreath around it. This was divided in due time for the guests, and they were served with rum or whisky; separating at an early hour to return to their homes.

The master-spirit of the Dutch Fork—made so by honest industry and persevering labor—was Col. John A. Summer, the son of Adam Summer, one of the pioneer settlers, who had come in 1750, and settled on Crim's or Grim's Creek, in what was then Orangeburg District, near the line dividing it from Ninety-six; now the line of division between Newberry and Lexington Districts. He had several sons younger than John, from whom sprang a numerous offspring—many living in their native State at the present day, and others settled in the West. One of the first victims to the perilous state of things in this region, was a member of this family. Nicholas Summer had already gained the rank of captain, and commenced life promisingly. One day, riding along the road from Granby, then Congaree and Kenneley's ferry on the Saluda river, being on military duty, he was killed by the accidental discharge of another officer's rifle. He left a widow, and a son now living near his old home.

Among the settlers of the Fork were two brothers from Odenwald, named John and Peter Setzler. The first was a gunsmith, and was called in the neighborhood "Rifle-maker;" the other a tailor, had obtained the cognomen of "Schneider Peter." Indeed nothing was more common than these sort of nicknames among the inhabitants of the Fork, especially the Swabians from Schwarbzwald, the most numerous class among the emigrants, and very blunt in their manners. Wherever there was a "Jacob," or "Yockle," it was sure to have a prefix; there was "Nacht Yockle"—"Rock Rockle"—"Branch Yockle"—"Mourer Yockle"—"Krum Yockle," and innumerable others. "John" was transmuted into "Hantz," and there was "Wild Hantz," "Schneider Hantz," &c., &c. One man named John Oswald, who had a notable son which he called his "Kozle," was thereafter known by the cognomen of "Kozle Hantz," and was thus called to the day of his death: nay, his children and grandchildren bear the name to this day.

One evening a party of scouts from the lower country, was approaching the little settlement where the Setzlers lived. The country had suffered much from the depredations of these marauders, who properly belonged to neither party in the Revolutionary struggle, and robbed and murdered according to their lawless will; for their watchword was, "free plunder." The party halted a few moments at the house of a farmer called Abraham Chapman, for refreshment, and in the brief conversation that ensued, their purpose to assault the house of John Setzler, leaked out.

"I reckon I have seen you afore," said one of the Forkers, who had been standing by the horses' heads. "You come from the Fork between the Enoree and Tygar."

The ruffian laid his hand on his weapon, but on second thoughts nodded, and grinned a savage recognition to the person who seemed to know him, inly resolving that he should perish for it.

"You be going to the Rifle-maker's! Now, do you know who helps them fellows—him and his brother?" asked the Forker.

"The Devil! I suppose!"

"Hush—not so loud; he may hear you! but it is the fact. I tell you, sirs, the whole country knows it."

"Knows what?"

"That nothing can ever succeed agin 'em. They have *the power!*"

"The devil's power?" and the marauders looked at each other anxiously, till the leader burst into a laugh.

"Ah! you had better take care!" said one of the lads belonging to the house. "You may be served like Mete and Ridlehober."

It was really true that the brothers Setzler were looked on with dread throughout that superstitious community, being supposed to possess supernatural gifts. Many strange and dark stories were told among the settlers, illustrating the imaginary powers bestowed upon them.

When questioned further, the boy continued—

"As I said, Ridlehober and Metz were determined to have some of Schneider Peter's splendid melons. There they was, ripe in the patch, and no one durst touch one on 'em!"

"I'd a made bold to ax him then!" observed another boy.

"And be huffed for your pains, and mebbe poisoned if he was the devil's own sarvant!" returned the other. "Wall, as I was tellin' ye, they went that same night arter the melons. It was dark as pitch, and they mounted their colts and had their meal-bags to fetch the beautiful melons away for supper. Each on 'em crammed in as many as the bag would hold, and they carried the stuffed bags to the fence, and hoisted 'em to their shoulders to fling 'em over. But when they had got the bags up, they couldn't move to throw 'em over, nor to flop 'em down agin."

"Stuff!" cried the leader; "What held 'em?"

"Massy on ye! 'twas *the power!*" cried the lad, and with a half groan of fear, his auditors looked around them.

"I tell ye truth; the Rifle-maker and Schneider Peter is both able to make any man stop still, and not move hand or foot—for as long as they please! It's not to be done in the day; for as soon as it began to be morning, Metz and the other fellow got back their strength like a flash o' lightnin'. But the old man had come out, and gin 'em a scoldin', and as he bade 'em begone, and come back no more, the day broke and they were free!"

The scouts begged their leader to take warning, and not attempt anything against these Mysterious Brothers; but he had heard they had money in the Rifle-maker's cabin, and he was determined to venture all risks. Though he laughed at their superstitious terrors, he was not free from their influence, but to drown them, he sprang to horse, and the party rode rapidly on.

The night was very dark, but a candle was burning in the house of the Rifle-maker. As they came up, the marauders drew a little back quite suddenly, for they saw the outline of the old man's head, sitting at the aperture which served for a window.

Their leader took no thought, but dashing up, sprang from his horse, and presented a pistol at the old man's breast. "I want your hard money!" he cried, with a brutal oath.

"Take it!" said the deep hollow voice of the Rifle-maker. The scouts waited for the report of the pistol.

"Shoot!—why don't you shoot! you rascal?" cried the same deep voice.

There was no reply.

Without a word more, the scouts jerked about their horses, and fled as on the wings of the wind. Had they not beheld their leader paralyzed, as the dying gleam of the candle within had shown him with arm uplifted, but motionless, still pointing the weapon at the breast of his enemy!

The would-be assassin had felt his arm seized with an iron gripe, and held fast in its first position. The pistol was wrenched from his hand; he was pushed violently backward and fell on the ground. But he had strength left to gain his feet in an instant, and finding himself alone, he lost no time in vaulting upon his horse and tearing away—leaving his pistol in the hands of his foe.

The Rifleman laughed heartily as he threw it on the table. His presence of mind, and enormous strength of arm, saved his life; and neither he nor his brother were ever, after that, molested by vagrant scouts. They were feared, in fact, more than a whole army of men; for the belief in their magic became almost universal. They enjoyed also the reputation they had earned more fairly, of hospitality, and charity to the needy; and many sufferers of the Revolution had cause to remember the kindness of the Mysterious Brothers.

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THE PARKINS FAMILY.

The Parkins Family was of note in the District of Newberry, South Carolina. They came from Winchester. One of them, Capt. Daniel Parkins, is well remembered. His sister was the wife of Hugh O'Neill, who settled on Little River, in Laurens District. It is a tradition in the family that on the death of a brother-in-law, while they were debating where he should be buried, a meteor, like a ball of fire, passing over the house, was seen to fall on a particular spot. This was regarded as a supernatural intimation where the dead should rest, and was the commencement of the graveyard now called Parkins.

Capt. Parkins, being educated in the principles of the Friends' or Quaker Society, took no active part on either side in the Revolutionary War, though he was supposed to favor the loyalists. He owned a mill on Saluda River, and employed his time in attending it, furnishing meal for the country around.

One day, one of his sisters, standing at the door of their dwelling-house, which was two or three hundred yards from the mill, saw a party of mounted men whom she knew to be whigs from Indian Creek, approaching. She knew their object must be to capture or slay her brother, who was obnoxious to them, and started to run to the mill and inform him of his danger.

The enemy saw her, and guessing her purpose, put their horses to full speed, to reach the mill before her. Fearfully glancing behind her, she saw how rapidly they were coming up, and shouted as loudly as she could, the warning to her brother, of whom she caught a glimpse at the entrance of the mill. Again her cries rang through the air; but he stirred not from his listless attitude; it was evident the noise of the machinery prevented the sound from reaching him. What was to be done?

The troopers seemed to devour the way behind her: they dashed nearer; some of them halloed to her to get out of the narrow road, or the horses would be upon her! The leading horse, galloping briskly, was alongside of her the next moment.

Obeying a quick impulse, the heroic girl snatched at the bridle of the foremost horse, pulled it off, and by jerking his head violently on one side as she did so, turned him out of the path into the woods. Then she sped on like a terrified fawn. Another rider, in advance of his companions, dashed along close to her; she seized his horse's bridle, and pulled it off as she had done the first. Her brother saw this; and as she flung out her arms towards him in token that he must fly—for she had no breath to shout—he snatched up his gun, leaped from the stone door-step of the mill, rushed into the river, and gaining a shoal, pursued it till he reached what is now called Pope's Island. This was then covered with the dense woods that shrouded all the river lands; and thick wreaths of the pendent moss, hanging from the trees like a trailing, funereal drapery, veiled the daylight from the impenetrable thickets.

As he sprang on dry land, Parkins turned to throw one glance at his baffled pursuers; then parting the curtain of moss, he disappeared in the recesses of the forest. The party in chase knew nothing of the shoal, nor how to get across to the island except by boats, and had they been able to reach it, they could not have threaded the wild labyrinth of woods; so, after a few moments' consultation, they turned back, two of them dismounting to recover the bridles Miss Parkins had thrown down, as she hastened back to the house, rejoicing in her brother's safety.

Daniel Parkins was afterwards married to Jane Caradine, who lived with her father, Abraham Caradine, farther down the Saluda. The simple wedding-cheer was interrupted by one of those incidents which occurred in the experience of many families. The inmates of the house had retired to rest, but were awakened by the ominous sound of trampling feet, and a suppressed murmur of voices. Closer the noise came, and the whispering outside betrayed the presence of enemies.

Through the chinks of the logs, armed men might plainly be perceived; and Parkins recognized some of them; they were probably the same who had endeavoured to surprise him at the mill. He roused his father-in-law; and both sprang from their beds, snatched their muskets, and threw into the barrels handfuls of powder and shot, priming in the same hurried manner. Listening on every side, they found that the house was surrounded. The terror and despair of the young bride, thus roused at midnight to witness a mortal struggle, in which those she loved the best were certain to fall—may be imagined, but not described.

There was but one possible way for escape, and that was a desperate one! Caradine whispered his son-in-law, and going to the door, which the bride's trembling hands were endeavoring to fasten more securely—he put her aside, threw the door wide open, and instantly fired upon a man who sat upon the fence just before it, The man sprang to his feet, then staggered and fell heavily to the ground, his head striking the door-step. Caradine and Parkins, taking advantage of the confusion and darkness, leaped over his prostrate body, and flourishing their guns, dashed boldly through the enemy's midst. They ran in different directions, each knowing his life depended on his speed.

Parkins gained the cover of the wood, and made good his escape. Caradine was an elderly man, and ran heavily. He was swiftly pursued, and as he passed through the rows of his corn-field, a shot from an unseen foe arrested his flight. He stopped, pressed his hand to his side, and sank to the ground with a deep groan. At the same instant his pursuers overtook him. They stopped, and gazed at each other, for they saw that their captive was dying.

Caradine half-raised himself from the ground, and turned so as to face his enemies. "Tell me—one thing," he said, quietly. "Is the rascal I shot at, dead?"

"He is dead!" answered one of the party.

"Then I am satisfied," said the wounded man, and sinking back on the ground—with a gasp or two—he breathed his last.

The hostile party left the ground. For the rest of the night the silence was undisturbed, except by low sobs of anguish from the bereaved woman, whose father lay slaughtered before her, while she had too much reason for believing her husband had shared the same fate.

Although a suspected loyalist, Parkins enjoyed the friendship of a gallant old soldier of liberty—Colonel Philemon Waters—his near neighbor. After the Revolution, he held many offices of public trust, and by mercantile business realized a large fortune. In 1802, he, and his wife, and two sons, died of the great epidemic of that year, called "the cold plague," all within five days. His fine estate was sold by his grandson.

An incident related of one of his descendants displays an unusual degree of courage and presence of mind. During the war, and for many years after, it was the custom, in going to Ninety-six, from O'Neill's mills, to cross Saluda River at Parkins' Ford; and plank from the pine-woods was hauled that way. A wagon and team belonging to Mrs. O'Neill, and driven by her son, a lad of seventeen, was engaged in this business, with another belonging to a neighbor—Mr. Jay. In one of their trips, they found the Saluda swollen, but concluded to ford it. Mrs. O'Neill's team attempted the passage first. When the wagon reached the deep water, it floated, with its load of plank, and horses, wagon, and driver were swept down the stream. The lad made every effort to extricate his horses by cutting them loose; but failed, not cutting the hame-strings, and losing his knife. Jay plunged into the water to swim to the rescue; but was seized with the cramp, and was obliged to climb upon a rock to save himself from drowning.

The noise of this struggle, and Jay's cry for help, reached young Parkins' ears; he ran to the river, and seeing the dangerous condition of the boy-driver and his team, threw off his coat, plunged in and swam to their assistance. He succeeded in cutting loose the head horse, but in trying to liberate another, struggling with the desperate animal, the knife was knocked out of his hand. Leaving his hopeless task, Parkins threw himself on the back of the loosed mare, swam her to land, and galloped to the nearest house. Then he procured another knife, rode back to the river, swam the mare again to the wagon, which the current was sweeping rapidly downward, cut loose the other horses, and saved them all, with the driver; rescuing Jay also, from his perilous position.

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ADVENTURES OF THE GLENN FAMILY.

David Glenn and his young wife came from Ireland to the American Colonies about 1773, with the last of the emigrants who left the Green Isle before the outbreak of the Revolution. Landing in Savannah, Georgia, they proceeded to South Carolina, and settled on the Enoree, in Newberry District. The dispute between the Colonies and the mother country was then waxing more fierce every day; and almost every one espoused one side or the other. Glenn cast in his lot with the patriots. He thought, like the rest of the Irish Presbyterians, "it was better to endure some evils than encounter the horrors of a Revolutionary War;" yet he acknowledged that it was still better "to endure all the protracted miseries of the struggle, than fail to enjoy liberty of conscience, of person and property."

When the United States declared themselves free, sovereign and independent, Glenn vowed himself without reserve to the cause, ready to water with his blood the forests of his adopted country.

Until the fall of Charleston—in May, 1780—the upper part of South Carolina scarcely felt the footsteps of war. It is true that she had seen Richardson's gallant army in December, 1775, repairing to their "snow campaign;" she had heard the thunder of Moultrie's guns of deliverance from the first Palmetto fort, battering the wooden walls of England's dominion; had wept over some of her sons slaughtered at Stone, and at Savannah in October 1779; yet, as a general thing, quiet reigned in the country above tide water. That horrible, desolating war, which armed fathers against sons, sons against fathers, brother against brother, and neighbor against neighbor, commenced after the surrender of Charleston. For nearly three years it swept with unmitigated fury, over the region above the falls of the Great Rivers. Ninety-six District—which then covered the tract of country lying above a line drawn from Silver Bluff on the Savannah River, by the mouth of Rocky Creek on the Saluda, to Hughey's Ferry on Broad River—at the close of the war, numbered, according to Ramsay, "fourteen hundred widows and orphans."

Glenn did duty as a private mounted soldier till December 1780, and, tradition says, was one of the militia men who, rallied around him by "the Game-cock of the Revolution," after the disastrous defeats at Camden and Fishing Creek—cheered their country even in her mourning weeds—with the hope of deliverance. Afterwards, as Lieutenant-Colonel, he commanded the lower regiment in the Fork, between Broad and Saluda Rivers—till June, 1782. He used to lament an incident which occurred at the battle of Eutaw. When the British lines gave way, and they fled before the vigorous charge of the American troops, in the pursuit Glenn overtook a soldier, and ordered him to the rear as a prisoner. The man, frantic with terror, seized his horse by the bridle, and pleaded for his life. He was assured of safety, as a prisoner: but still clung to the reins in an agony of supplication; and though sternly ordered to let go, still held on. At this juncture, two of the British dragoons were seen approaching. Glenn saw that he or the prisoner must be sacrificed; the latter fell before his sword: and thus freed, he was able to save himself.

It was always Glenn's boast, that he had never taken "*protection;*" and he exhibited unceasing hostility to the marauders, horse-thieves and murderers with which the country was infested. These iron outlaws, therefore, sought his life with fierce animosity.

On one occasion, Cunningham's "mounted loyalists," as they were designated in the British service, making a night attack upon Colonel Glenn, surrounded his house. They demanded that the door should be opened for them. Glenn heard the clamor outside, but knew not who was seeking an entrance. Obeying the first impulse, he sprang out of bed, and without dressing himself, threw open the door.

Instantly he felt himself seized by two men, members of that ruthless tory band, whose deeds of atrocity had obtained for them the name of "the Bloody Scout." As they drew him into the house, they inquired tumultuously for McClusky, who was his friend, and lodged with him that night. Not yet knowing the party, or their purpose, Glenn informed them McClusky was asleep in the upper part of his house. Some of the ruffians made haste to climb to the upper apartment, forced an entrance, and stabbed the sleeping patriot. Roused by the murderous stroke, and seeing his enemies in the dusky light, he begged them to spare his life; but they rushed upon him to complete their work. Thus beset, he shouted "Murder!" as loudly as possible.

Glenn heard the cry, and calling for the officer in command, he demanded protection for his friend.

"Hold your tongue!" cried the man who had hold of the colonel; "hold your tongue; it will be your turn next!"

In a moment after, while one of his captors turned to speak to another, Glenn felt their grasp relax. By a sudden and violent effort, he jerked himself out of their hold, darted through the crowd, sprang out of the door, and, although the moon was shining so brightly as to show his flying figure, he made his escape through the peach orchard.

The marauders ran after him, shouting, and fired several times; but without effect. While Glenn was in full career, he passed a corner of the fence, where one of the party was lurking. As the cry "Shoot the fellow! Shoot him!" rang from the house, the man snatched his gun which was lying on the ground, aimed at the colonel, and pulled the trigger; it snapped; and before he could raise the weapon for a second effort, the fugitive had leaped the fence, and was in the shelter of the deep forest. While he, undressed as he was, hid himself from the outlaws, his wretched wife managed to escape their fury within the house, believing that her husband had fallen a victim. After the departure of the assailants, Glenn crept back to his house, and was received with joy as one restored from the dead.

At another time, two of the boldest and bloodiest of this savage band—Dick and Ned Turner—with Bill Elmore, and others of their associates, made a descent upon the Whig settlement of the Long Lane. They captured two lads, Robert and James Dugan, bound them, and taking them to their temporary camp about a mile distant, left them under guard. Returning then to their bloody work, they assailed two other houses in the settlement, and murdered the proprietors; inquiring for William Wilson and Colonel Glenn; for they were bent on wreaking vengeance for the death of a relative. These last were on the expedition to Eutaw. Disappointed in the hope of securing these two victims, the villains returned to the place where they had left the two youthful prisoners, and hewed them in pieces.

On the following morning the mother of the lads went forth in search of them, accompanied by one of her neighbors, and came upon the scene of the butchery. One had his hand chopped off; the other his thumb and finger; and their heads were literally split open! The weeping mother and sympathizing friend gathered up the mangled remains, wrapped them in sheets, and buried them without coffins! Horrible! is the exclamation of humanity. Yet such sad scenes must outrage humanity in civil war!

The family of Colonel Glenn, saved by his absence from assault, always supposed that Cunningham himself commanded this party; but others who were acquainted with his movements, declared that he was not present on that bloody night. The Long Lane settlement consisted of only a few families, thorough Whigs, and therefore exposed to midnight assault by cowardly Tories, who "never met them in broad day and a fair field, without repenting their temerity."

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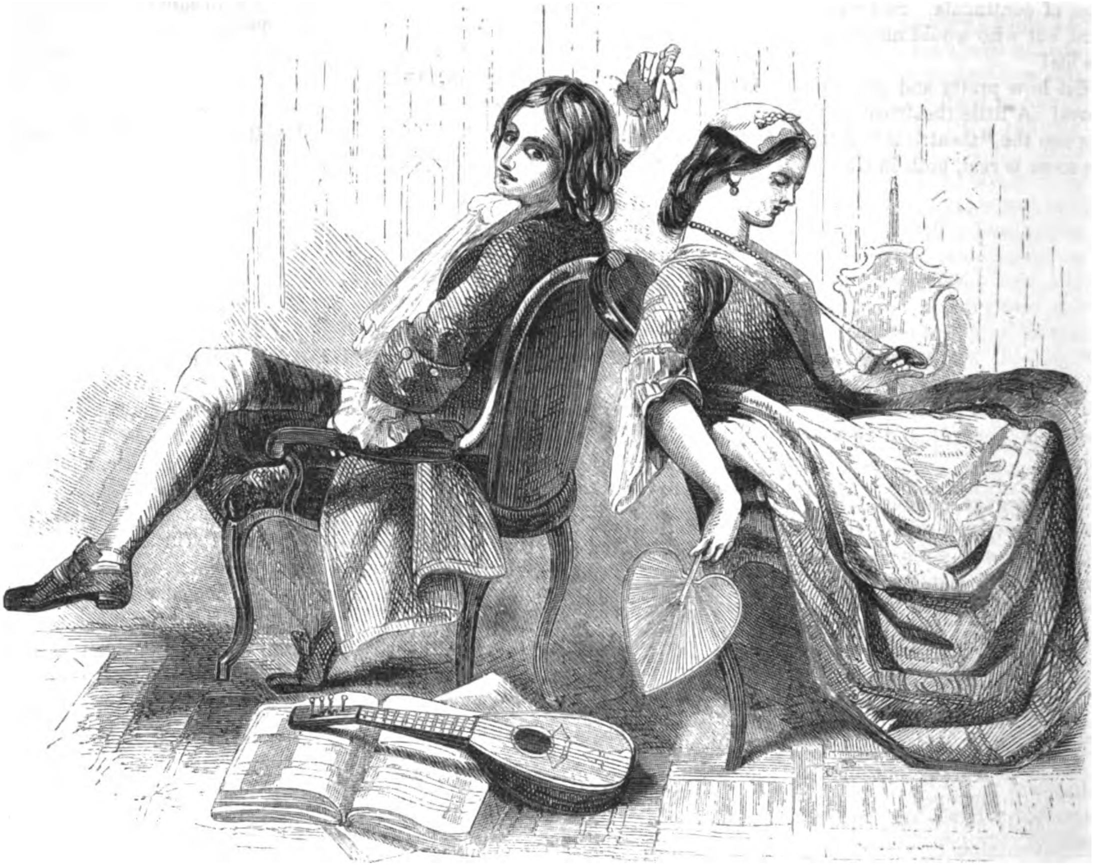


THE TIFF.

The above design was copied from a water-color painting, and selected for illustration as a pleasant and amusing trifle. Its story is clear enough. A couple of young, very young lovers, have had "A Tiff;" but they are both already seemingly tired of the few moments' estrangement. The girl pouts, but her restless fan reminds her lover that she is there to be reconciled. And the gay, careless, good-humored confidence of the lad, playfully making advances with his glove, is excellent. Every body knows that a courtship without an occasional "tiff," isn't worth experiencing. Very few people have pleasanter recollections than the little fights and quarrels which enlivens that delicious period of love-making, and the above incident will recall many a similar one in the history of most of our readers—all that portion, at least, who have passed through love-scrapes, and where is there a boy or girl above the age of six in this precocious age, who hasn't? We all know how the above affair is going to turn out. It is the certainty of the delicious reconciliation in store which renders love-quarrels so peculiarly fascinating. Somebody describes love as self absorbed in an idea dearer than self. The subject couldn't be defined better if all the colleges were to attempt it. But love is not only an absorption of self, but an absorption of everything. There is no outside world to the lover. His heart is the universe. His emotions embrace all that he knows of life or existence. The world is condensed into a sensation, or as we might put it in another way, a throbbing, living, intense sensation expands and reaches to the limits of creation. To a lover there are no other events or existences in the world, but those summed up in his sphere, or, if dimly conscious of such things beyond himself, they are only the back-ground to the mighty drama of smiles, kisses, frowns, and favors which he enacts. A surface no larger than a wafer, if close to the eye, will shut out the world; a lover's kiss will accomplish the same result in a way no less effectual. The smile, the glance, the blush, the shaking of a curl, the touch of the hand, the frown, the coy favor, the triumph of an arm privileged to the waist, the long-waited-for and anxiously-stolen kiss, the quarrel purposely lengthened to heighten the delight of the harmony restored, the "turning to favor and prettiness,"—all these are grand and mighty things which crowd into oblivion states and kings and the petty doings of continents. Self-worship it is, of the intensest kind, but who would not be such a self-worshipper all his life!

But how pretty and gay and graceful is the picture above! A little theatrical, perhaps in arrangement, but one sees the "theatrical" at times, even in real life; and the scene is real, both in the people and in the feeling; in spirit and faithfulness, really admirable. Many of its points are exceedingly fine. The costume gives it picturesqueness. The music and guitar denote how graceful and refined has been the interrupted harmony, while both of the figures present various points, well conceived, nicely touched, and well worth a brief examination by the reader.

HAROLD:

A TALE OF TO-DAY, IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

BY OLIVER BUNCE,

AUTHOR OF "LOVE IN '76," "BLANCHE DEARWOOD," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.—JEALOUSY.

THE strange conduct of Grace haunted me, and weighed upon my mind like a gloomy presentiment. I could not restrain myself from giving the incident in her boudoir, a significance and importance it scarcely deserved. I recalled the few queries put to me by my father that morning in regard to Grace, and this heightened the mystery. I could not put the circumstances together, nor educe from them any satisfactory solution to the difficulty. Turning the subject into every light, and growing more and more puzzled the more I thought of it, I at last reached home.

Imy was in the little parlor, absorbed in a batch of magazines arrived by that day's post, and Harold was stretched out upon the rug like a huge dog, leaning on his elbow with his cheek upon his hand, his eyes turned watchfully up to Imy's face.

Silent and moody I replied to a quick, sharp query of Harold's with a monosyllable, and plunged at once into the first book I laid my hands upon. I read away furiously, that is, I turned over a great many leaves with a spiteful rapidity; but as to the matter—Heaven save the mark!—it might have been Chinese, or, which would have been equally intelligible, Mr. Browning, for aught I knew to the contrary.

I got up several times and went to the window to listen for their return. I say *their* return, for the fact that Mr. Clarefield was my father's companion in the visit to Grace, I was assured of from the first. At the end of an hour I heard the approach of horses. They rode directly to the stables, and in a few minutes entering the house together, they ascended directly to the library and shut themselves in.

It was evident there was no chance of learning anything that night, so I moodily went away to my own apartment, and throwing open the window, flung myself in a chair at hand, and with eyes staring up at the stars, gave my imagination a free rein and an active spur.

Physical objects loom up largely and disproportionately at night; so do the objects that are reflected upon the camera obscura of the brain. The night is always an unsafe time for the contemplation of important mental questions, for it is a period when the fancy is the most active principle of the intellect. If one wants to obtain a clear, rational, healthy insight into any subject, let him go out in the sunlight and discuss it. The moon has almost as much influence upon the tides of thought as the tides of the ocean; it is responsible for much of the puny sentiment, disordered fancy, and sickly thought which the world staggers under.

Of course upon this occasion, I kept on brooding upon my little mystery, until it loomed up into huge proportions. It soon got to be a question of little less magnitude than one of life and death. Love is always a monstrous vanity; a huge expansion of self; and upon all the matters and issues of love, we stalk about like giants. And so, if I kept on star-gazing and musing upon the subject that perplexed me until I grew absurd and extravagant, and even lost all power of rational thought, my condition was only the normal state of love—a natural phase of the disease. I am ashamed to say how disordered and wild my fancy grew that night My fantastic humor, however, at last became exhausted, and after tragically putting out the light with a soliliquy upon the extinguishment of love, I jumped under the coverlids and soon dropped off into slumber.

I awoke the next morning marvellously calmer and cooler. The very first suggestion of my rational condition was sensible enough; to go to my father and very simply inquire of him the reason of his visit to Grace Ellington with Mr. Clarefield; if Mr. Clarefield knew Grace, and what he was to Grace.

The opportunity was soon afforded me. Soon after breakfast he went into the garden, pruning knife in hand, and a few moments later I followed him. He was busy training up and pruning his vines, propping his nurselings, and cutting and fashioning the various growths to the forms he designed.

"Well, Mark," said he, as I came up to him, looking at me from a stooping position, through the hollow of his arm, "have you come to study the wisest of pursuits?"

"What! Gardening?" exclaimed I, contemptuously.

"Yes, Mark Harlow. Goethe said it, and I like his opinion better than—well, better than most people's."

"Father," said I impatiently, determined to come at once to the subject uppermost in my mind, "didn't you and Mr. Clarefield make Grace Ellington a visit last evening?"

"We certainly rode that way."

"Who is Mr. Clarefield? My mother's cousin, you said, but he must be something more than that."

"Very true; he is Harold's father, for instance."

"Of course I know that, sir. But why does he make mysterious and secret visits to Miss Ellington?"

"Was it a secret visit, Mark?" inquired my father, bending down a long rank shoot of a vine and ruthlessly severing it at its base.

"Why, yes—that is, it appeared so, sir." I felt myself getting a little confused.

"Do you mean that you were not kept informed of Mr. Clarefield's movements?"

"You must admit," replied I, making a bolt from the question, "that you and Mr. Clarefield made a mysterious and singular visit—"

"How mysterious, Mark? How singular?"

"There is a stange secret in the matter," exclaimed I, making another bolt.

"I can't deny it," was the irritatingly calm response.

"Then you do admit—"

"Nothing. You say there is a strange secret in the matter. I certainly cannot deny your assertion, for you may be better informed than I am."

I felt the blood tingle in my cheek. I wasn't making much progress, it was very evident.

"There *is* a secret, sir, or a mystery which you share—"

"Stop, Mark. If I do share a secret, and you are so positive about the matter that I am willing to allow the hypothesis for the sake of the argument—if I do share a secret, it isn't mine you know."

"You are very right, sir, but I am deeply interested in Miss Ellington—"

"In whom do you fear a rival? Mr. Clarefield or me?"

I could not restrain an impatient stamp of the foot. With a flushed cheek and angry manner I recounted the affair of the preceding evening; my unexpected appearance in the boudoir, the rapid withdrawal of himself and Mr. Clarefield, and Grace's singular agitation.

"That's the story, sir, and you see for yourself that I cannot help experiencing a painful perplexity upon the subject. If I can obtain any light from you, well; if not, I must demand it from another source."

My father, during my relation of the story, became intensely absorbed in pruning and nipping an apricot, and in the abstraction of his employment, even turned his back upon me. When I had finished, his frame began to shake with suppressed laughter.

"I thought, Mark, that I was past such suspicion. It is rather odd, to be sure, to be accused by my own son—"

"Oh, sir, if you persist in refusing me, I'll withdraw."

I turned angrily on my heel, and strode away.

"Mark," called my father, somewhat imperatively. I came back to him without speaking.

"Mark," said he gravely, "I cannot approve of your delicacy. If I know anything, I'm scarcely so foolish as to be pumped. I should have esteemed the evidence of forbearance on your part—of forbearance and confidence, Mark."

My father's reproof cut me to the quick. I began to stammer out an apology, but he interrupted me.

"Will you let me know, Mark, the reason of your interest in Miss Ellington?"

My father had not only repelled my approaches, but this looked like carrying the war into Africa. I picked up a green twig and nervously began tearing it with my fingers.

"Do you love her?"

The abruptness of the question sent the blood in a tumult to my face.

"Are you engaged?" continued he, becoming very deeply interested in the bush he was trimming, and scrutinizing it closely as he talked.

"Yes, sir," I stammered out, and must have looked very foolish, very red, and very awkward when I said it.

"I like her exceedingly," said my father, falling into his usual frank manner. His brief remark quite relieved me. I caught at it as a hint to a possible cause of his visit to Grace.

"You will want to marry some day, I suppose."

"We think of it, sir."

"Before you think of marrying, Mark, oughtn't you think of a profession? It is time for you to decide upon a career."

"I have."

"Indeed; what?"

"I desire, sir," with a flourish, "to embrace the pursuit of letters—to enroll my name—"

"Throw away your stilts, Mark," said my father, interrupting me, with a comical look.

"In short, sir, to take up the pen. I have already commenced to write a book."

"Ah! What about?"

"A book of imagination, sir—a novel. I am sure of success."

"You are sure of no such thing."

"Sir!"

"You have very little real knowledge of your own capacity, Mark. You admire books—your fancy is captivated by them, and you would like to be an actor in a field where you are so pleased an auditor. This, I take it, is the top and bottom of your literary *penchant*."

"You are harsh, sir."

"Not at all. I shall throw no obstacle in the way of a fair trial of your ability in that direction. And yet, Mark, your announcement gives me pain."

"Why, sir? The career of literature is—"

"Misery! I speak understandingly, my son. Success, if entire and great, is fascinating; but, ah, Mark, of all the battles in the world, in nothing is there a struggle so terrible, where so many sink down and are destroyed—where so few emerge from the conflict, and they stained, battered, and torn! To one victor there are a thousand slain."

"Genius will always triumph."

"That means that you are a genius. I shan't dispute it with you. But I think you are in error in attempting without experience or knowledge, so bold a venture as a book. Skirmish a while first, Mark. Strength is the result of exercise and training. Try your wings first; you will drown if you fly too far at the start."

"You talk as if genius were muscle. It is fire snatched from heaven—the Promethean spark which lights with a magnetic touch the innermost circle of—"

"Please to be intelligible, Mark."

My eloquence collapsed and hung its head. It revived in a moment."

"Literature isn't a trade, sir."

"Until you master it as a trade you can't succeed. It is this trusting to what you call genius which plunges so many in the mud."

How was it that my father talked so much like Grace? Had Grace been in the right, and was this wisdom? The thought vexed me. Men never *do* like wise women.

"But," continued I pertinaciously, "there was Byron—"

"Ah!" exclaimed my father.

There was something peculiarly uncomfortable in this "Ah!" It irritated me. There was a world of sharp satire buried in it.

"And Shakspeare—"

"Oh!"

I confounded the "Oh!" between my teeth. It was worse than the "Ah!" I felt it pricking me all over.

"We had better not measure the Titans, Mark. Proceed as you will, but don't break your neck by climbing."

A good deal worsted by the encounter, with my vanity in sad tatters, and numberless thorns pricking my self-sufficiency, I withdrew from the interview.

I sought revenge on True. I flew to the stable, hastily bridled and saddled him, and dashed off along the road in the direction of Grace's cottage, at True's best speed. I ground my teeth together as I vowed that the mystery should be explained, and infuriated even by an imaginary refusal, struck at my horse, and blindly urged him to a speed in keeping with the excitement into which I was plunged.

My father's humor was genial and happy, but he concealed under an urbane temper, a smooth and polished manner—so perfect in its smoothness and polish, that you didn't know how sharp it was until it impaled you. It was a kind of sarcasm that lingered, and stung with the recollection, more than at the time. Sometimes, you would be quite unconscious of any hidden point, until, perhaps, long afterward, you would suddenly discover that you had been caressing a nettle all the while—and such discoveries, how they would send the blood tingling through the veins!

But I know now how wise my father was in puncturing my huge literary vanity, and letting its inflation out. Young author-dom is the vainest of bipeds; his airs and assumptions might make angels weep; he struts about with bedraggled feathers, flapping his wings and crowing in the face of the world.

I kept on urging True to his speed, dashing along in a cloud of dust, heedless of all that I met or encountered, when suddenly upon turning a short corner, I pitched headlong into a horse upon the road. There was a snort, a plunge, a shout, a cloud of dust before my eyes, and then, as I reined True forcibly in, I found myself in the presence of a man standing by the roadside, holding a horse by the bridle.

It was no other than Doctor Ellington.

Doctor Ellington was an exceedingly odd, old-fashioned fellow; always dressed in a snuff-colored suit a world too wide; with a snuff-colored wig a world too big; and a snuff-colored complexion. You would continually encounter him in all sorts of places, and upon all sorts of roads, public highways and obscure by-ways, and invariably leading his horse by his bridle. No mortal ever saw him mounted. I have met him hundreds of times, even long distances from his home, but always exactly in the same way—coming around a corner upon you, his bridle slipped over his arm, trudging, heated, dusty but patiently along. His horse was a bony, huge footed, loose-jointed affair, and was gifted with a motion that looked as if it would churn up one's bones to ride him.

The Doctor was noted for another peculiarity. His oldest friend had never heard him say Yes or No to any question. He drawled out his words with the most provoking slowness, and never committed himself positively, even upon the matter of a shoe-tie.

"Why, Doctor," exclaimed I, as soon as I discovered who it was, "I came near riding over you."

"Well—I—don't—know—but—you—have—a fast—horse."

"Is Miss Ellington at home, sir?"

"Well—really—sometimes—she—does—go—out."

"Was she at home when you left?"

"Well—I—don't—know—I—think—I—didn't—notice."

"It is a pleasant morning, sir," said I, finding there was no chance of obtaining any information.

"Well—there—isn't—much—chance—of rain."

"Good morning, sir," said I, touching up my horse.

"Well—it's—most—noon—ain't it?" were the last words I heard as I rode off.

Grace was Doctor Ellington's ward. Beneath the Doctor's eccentricity of manner, so Grace often said, were great goodness of heart, extensive learning, and deep knowledge of the world. These acquirements were somewhat incredible, but Grace always exacted perfect faith in them. Grace had been under his charge since she was ten years of age. As we, however, had only been their neighbors for little more than two years, we knew nothing about Grace's girlhood. For a long time we had all supposed that she was the Doctor's daughter, until Grace herself undeceived me one day—stating that she was an orphan, and that the Doctor had assumed her care out of friendship for her parents.

"It is very strange, Mark," she once remarked, "but I appear to have no relations—no near ones. Both my father and mother must have been without kin. My mother was the descendant of a French *émigré*—which accounts for her isolation; my father was an orphan, without brother or sister. I am the last of my race."

After parting from the Doctor, I kept True upon his speed, until I drew up before the Doctor's cottage. To my inquiry of the servant, the reply was, that Miss Grace had gone to walk in the forest. I knew her familiar haunts, and walking my horse through a lane, passed by a gate into a forest path. I rode along leisurely, through the shadowy aisles, sure of finding Grace by the old oak, if not before reaching it. The oak I have described as standing upon the outskirts of the forest. In the direction which I approached, it was screened somewhat by low growths, and, as I drew near, I heard the voice of Grace before I could see her. It was necessary to ride around a short space in order to find a practicable approach; and just as I turned my horse's head to do so, I was astonished to hear Harold's voice in response to that of Grace's. Urging my horse forward, in a moment more I came in view of the tree, and then was revealed to me a scene which cut into my heart like a two-edged blade.

Upon the ground, leaning against the tree, Grace was seated, and stretched upon the grass at her feet, with his head in her lap, was Harold Clarefield. I sat paralyzed, and looked. He was winding his fingers among her curls, and shaking them out in the air. He plucked wild flowers and twined them among her locks. And she smoothed his brow, and left her hand resting upon his bosom. It was pain, keen, acute, and terrible which I experienced first; but as I continued looking on, rage dark and furious surged up. I could feel it rising as the angry sea rises. Spurring up my horse, and crushing through the brush, I rode directly into their presence. Harold sprang to his feet, and Grace rose a little flushed, but looking at me steadily. I could only glare at them. My lips worked, but the emotion's which raged and tossed in my breast could find no expression.

"Why, Mark," exclaimed Harold, "are you ill? Don't you know Grace? So beautiful, Mark: so like a star."

"Know her," cried I, at last finding voice, "know her? Now I know her—never before—never after this. Oh, Grace! I would have thanked God to have struck me dead, before bringing this knowledge to me."

I turned my horse's head, when Grace's voice, so full of reproach, pride, and sadness, arrested me. I turned upon her abruptly.

"Well, madam?"

"Hear me, Mark—and yet not now."

"Now, for we do not meet again."

"Oh, Mark! You give me more cause for anger, than I have you. Think of the fearful thing your conduct intimates; think how you degrade me and yourself by suspicion."

A laugh, full of bitterness, broke from my lips. I was frantic with rage.

"I think of what I have seen. There lies the degradation, Grace Ellington. You have betrayed me! wronged me! cheated me! been false to me! Farewell, Grace Ellington. I have seen enough to know what a poor, fond fool I have been. We never meet again. Go to your new love. I crave your pardon for interrupting your pleasures."

"Mark! Mark! This jealousy is groundless!"

"Groundless! I saw you together—fondling, caressing, here, now, upon this spot. Groundless, indeed!"

With mad fury I struck my horse a violent blow, but as he leaped forward, Harold, with a clear single bound, sprang to the bridle, and catching it desperately, clung dangling to it, bending True's head to the ground and arresting his progress. Infuriated, I even raised my whip to strike him, but the thin, pale face, and strangely glittering eye, checked my uplifted arm.

"Mark, you love Grace. She is an angel, Mark. I know it. Her voice is like the ripple of a river—there is peace in it. It puts out the fire in the heart. Come down. Love her, Mark, love her—I'm nothing but—"

I heard no more. My whip fell furiously upon the head of True, who leaped high in the air, and springing forward with a wild bound, flung Harold upon the ground at her side, and then, with a scream ringing behind me, dashed with a fierce speed through the forest paths.

CHAPTER V.

DEPARTURE.

JEALOUS of a boy—a harmless, pitiful creature, maimed in mind, walking under an impending doom! Jealous of poor Harold! I beat at my brow and tugged at my heart in very shame; but still the jealousy was there—a flame that would not be quenched.

Jealous of Harold? Did I not see? She had been caught by his strange, wild beauty. He had fascinated her. For there was something infatuating about Harold. I had observed how Imy was affected when they first met. Grace's heart had never been mine, but an open page for new impressions; Harold had stamped it —boy and mad as he was; and I might go sip elsewhere. The flower I had feasted upon would yield no more sweets to me. Jealous of Harold, truly, for I had mighty cause!

Aye, but doubt of Grace? Again, had I not seen? It was not proof fished up and jointed. There was no cool weighing of probabilities. One single, terrible fact had burst upon me, convincing every sense—against feeling, impulse, love, desire, and every motive and thought I had—the fact topped them, blazed higher than them all, drowned them all—the fact was a tremendous black tower of strength, against which love might hurl itself forever, against which hearts might be shivered—it would still stand impregnable. How else but doubt Grace at the foot of such a fact as this? I might seek to drown the doubt with clamor of protestation, it lived coeval with the fact!

I saw them in each other's arms.

This was the fact. What cunning could undo it? The scene flew before me, and repeated itself a thousand times around me, as True sped frantically along, spurred, and beaten, and whipped with abandoned fury, until she bounded beneath me as if she were all nerve and fire. Chaos was within me, but out of the chaos gradually came such fragments as those above. Shame mingled with my fury, and at moments suffused me; but thrusting through the shame stalked the huge *fact*, and rage came howling up to drive out all other spirits.

Passion consumes itself. Succeeding my paroxysms of rage came at last calmer feelings, and with them the melting mood. Love, torn hopes, secret dreams, fond purposes—the gentler passions came crowding upon me, moaning and sad, blinding eyes with tears, and piercing the heart afresh with keen blades; following this anguish and dark suffering, came fixed purpose and stern resolve.

I stood dusty and stained in my father's library.

"My permission to go to New York?"

"Yes, sir. To-day."

"To-day?" My father stared at me incredulously.

"To-day, sir. You spoke of my need of a profession. I will begin at once."

"What profession do you propose, Mark?"

"I have a manuscript, sir. I will sell that, and embark in literature."

My father's lips did not move, but yet there was a transparent smile about them.

"But why so suddenly?"

"Do not ask me, sir. I wish to depart at once—by the evening train. I require no preparation."

The assent was given. But my father, with his hands in his pockets, jingled his keys, and stared wonderingly at the floor.

I hastened to my own apartment, and tossed my apparel in a trunk.

"Now for a career," exclaimed I, trying to force up a little enthusiasm; "now for fame and greatness. They shall see what is in me."

My simulated enthusiasm fell vapid and cold. Fame was no longer a glory and a star; it looked bedraggled and dead as a dish-clout.

I sat down, and burying my face in my hands, thought of Grace. To think of Grace was to think in a tumult; with wind and wave rising and beating; with emotions and passions tossing, jostling, crowding, and topping one upon another, until chaos reigned again. They came, these passions, rolling over me like black waves. Suddenly, like a shock, a hand was laid upon my shoulder. I jumped up. It was my sister Imy. She flung her arms around my neck, exclaiming—

"Mark, are you going away? Is it possible? Do not leave us."

"I must, Imy."

"Something has happened, I'm sure."

"Something has, Imy; but, don't ask me what. I'm going to town—going into the world to win fame and greatness, as you know we used to dream I should. My happiness is all shattered here."

"And Grace——"

"Don't speak of her. I cannot bear it."

"Mark—what do you mean?"

"You shall know, but not now—I could not recount it. My love is a broken thing, Imy."

My sister's eyes filled quickly. She dropped on her knees at my side, and winding her arms about me, looked up in my face.

"Tell me all, Mark."

I patted her cheek, and forced a smile.

"Don't think of it, sis. Talk to me of yourself. Tell me plainly, do you love Frank Bloomer?"

How suddenly the eyes dropped! how suddenly the cheeks mantled!

"He is a noble fellow, Imy. I see you *do* love him. I won't put you to the pain of saying so. I couldn't see my Imy married to one I would like better."

Her eyes looked up, bright and suffused; her cheeks glowed richly; happiness beamed from her face. For beauty, give me the blush of young innocence in the first consciousness of love.

But her face grew shadowed quickly.

"Some great sorrow has befallen you, Mark. This departure is so sudden, so strange, so unaccountable. You could not have thought of it an hour ago. I shall be most unhappy, if you leave without explaining."

"It is not so sudden," said I, cheerfully, "as it appears. I have secretly contemplated it for a long time. Circumstances have only hastened it. Come, Imy, you must promise to ask no more questions—you shall know everything, eventually. Help me now to make ready. John shall drive to the station with my trunk. I will ride True over, and John can lead her back. Come, bustle, bustle, Imy—time is short. No tears—only smiles, I charge you."

My father came in to say some parting words. He evidently looked for a further explanation of my conduct, but I avoided the subject. My trunk duly strapped, John tossed it in his wagon, and drove off. Mr. Clarefield came up to make a parting salutation. I thought that he looked pale and ill. I leaped upon True—it would be the last time that I could mount her for many a long day—and waving my hand to the little group gathered in the doorway, galloped off.

There was a hard tug at the heart as I did so. I assumed a gay manner while facing my friends, but no sooner turned from them, than my heart went down, down, down like a rock.

I was striding out into a future, all shadow now—with the light of love no longer upon it; sundered hopes, dead happiness, shattered peace, were all behind. Darkness was upon me; gloomy bitterness, and hate, and all the passions raged within, coming up grimly again the moment restraint was removed—stirred up, perhaps, in a search for justification of my conduct.

A little way from the house, I met Harold. He was tramping up and down the water's edge, as he often did, plashing into the pools, stretching out his arms, and muttering wild things. When my eyes fell upon him, I was seized with sudden shame. There was a slight wound upon his temple, and a little blood—a wound inflicted by me. I wanted to hide my head forever. To think that I had warred upon tender and sad-hearted Harold—upon a poor, frail, broken flower. I was pierced with exquisite remorse.

"Mark," said he, walking towards me, "why did you run away from us? Grace began to weep. Isn't she beautiful? Her voice is music—it stills my soul. If I could only hear it forever. I love her, Mark."

Passion is a kaleidoscope. With every turn, it takes a new aspect. Or, it is a chameleon—with every object a new color. Remorse fled when Harold ceased, and insane jealousy rose up.

"How did you come to know her?" said I, sharply.

"Come to know her? My father took me to her. 'Some one to love,' said he, and that made me happy."

Had I not been doggedly blind, the clue, by this speech, to all my perplexity would have been within my grasp. But passion always raves in darkness, and jealousy stumbles in the light of day. I saw nothing, as it was, but confirmation of my doubts.

"Harold," said I, "you have driven me away forever."

"How? how? It isn't so, Mark Harlow. I like you—how could I drive you away?"

"You have plunged me in misery, dark, hopeless, Harold. I leave this place, this house, the country; leave them, and care never to see them again, and you are the cause."

"How? how?" I heard him wildly cry as I struck True sharply, and galloped swiftly away. I would not heed his cry, but doggedly rode on.

Thoughts shifted, and feelings blew hot and cold on that memorable ride. I stopped my horse at times, and tried to measure the extent of the vast changes which one day had effected. I thought of Grace as I had known her—so fair, so full of love and tenderness, so brilliant; of the hours of exquisite happiness I had known beneath her smiles, of the hopes that had flourished and were dead—I thought of these things until I leaned forward, and, burying my face in True's mane, shed unmanly tears.

Then I shot upright, and asked if I were not in a dream—if this consciousness of shattered happiness was not a mad fancy! I turned my horse's head, and looked homeward. I lifted my cap in the sweet air, and pressed my temples with my hands. In that sweet air, and that familiar scene, unchanged in no particular from a hundred preceding days of happiness, was I to believe all that I was trying to believe?

Grace Ellington—Grace, the truest, fairest, noblest woman in the county—Grace, whose heart I had sounded time and time—Grace, the flower which I had vowed to pluck and wear, whose heart had been welded to mine, whom I knew better than all the world else, loved better than all the world else—she, whose tears, and smiles, and thoughts, and fears, and hopes, had all been mine—she false? Oh, the monstrous, huge absurdity!

But then there was that gaunt, hideous, impregnable FACT.

They were in each other's arms!

I struck at my horse until he bounded forward as if I would escape the fact.

Then in the next reaction of feeling, in a spasm of incredulous tenderness, I even turned and galloped a little way back, determined to seize and recover my lost happiness. I cursed myself as mad and infatuated. I railed at the folly that was within me, and clutched at it with my fingers, as if I would drag it forth and put it under my feet.

Alas! the folly was fortified in high walls, and all the devils guarded it.

Crushing through the brush, a horse came speeding along a forest path, and bounded out upon the road within ten feet of me. I was nearly impelled upon the rider, before I could draw up, and when I looked, was startled and amazed to see before me Grace Ellington. She had rode far and fast, as dust and heat denoted.

"Mark Harlow," said she, looking grandly down, "will you walk with me a little way?" She pointed to the secluded path from which she had just emerged. I dismounted, without speaking, and threw the bridle over a shrub. Grace sprang to the ground without waiting for assistance, and led the way. We went on a few feet in silence, then she abruptly turned towards me.

"There are some indignities, Mr. Harlow, that require more than human patience to endure. Such a one you have inflicted upon me. I am willing to forgive rashness, thoughtlessness, but never intentional wrong—*never*. Such an insult as I experienced at your hands to-day, if coolly entertained and uttered——"

"Did I not see——"

"Stop, sir. We will not recount the matter. You are the last man in the world who has a right to doubt me. My faith in you has been perfect and entire, above the reach of circumstances to shatter. I expected yours in me to be no less beyond suspicion—and suspicion, Mark Harlow, is what I will not bear."

"Grace, Grace, I could have believed nothing but the evidences of my senses. You can explain."

"I will explain nothing."

"Have you sought this interview to tell me only this?"

"I will not descend to remove unfounded doubts. If you cannot trust me in the face of circumstances, you will be the sport of every trifle your jealous nature may contrive into evidences of unfaithfulness. I ask you if you trust me, or if you doubt me—now, upon the strength of your faith in me, and upon no other basis?"

"I love you, Grace——"

"Jealous natures love weakly."

"Did I not see Harold in your arms?"

"And without pausing to take counsel of your love or your faith, you allowed a single unexplained incident—which to love and confidence would have been made clear as glass—to outweigh all your knowledge of me, your vows, your belief, your love. Mark Harlow, I will not be the sport of jealousy—I will not be exposed to its whims and caprices. Trust me—

our happiness may be restored—continue to doubt me, and this is the last time we meet."

When passion drags us into sin and evil, Pride is the gaoler who shuts the door upon us and guards against our return—and Pride was a vile Turnkey in my nature, who barred out the light of sense and reason—who called up other imps of Rage, Doggedness, Will, Stubborness, to keep him in countenance.

"I have a right," said I, slowly, "to demand the motives of your conduct, Grace, and it is simply impossible for me to return to my former state of confidence and trust, with one *fact* unexplained."

Grace flushed darkly, and then turned deathly pale.

"Mark! Mark! May Heaven forgive you!"

"You have but to speak a word—if, because of that word remaining unspoken, we become estranged, the blame will be with you, Grace Ellington."

"What assurance have I," with an angry flashing of the eye, "that you will believe the explanation? It is as easy to doubt my word as to doubt my honesty!"

"What I ask is simply my right. I saw you in Harold Clarefield's arms—that was a damning fact, and I will not trust my honor again——"

"Pause where you are. We will have no recriminations—no epithets—no passion. I have heard you—you have elected your course—let us part."

"Grace," I sprang forward and seized her hand, "will you not explain——"

"No, Mark Harlow. Unhand me, sir."

"I demand it. Who, what is Harold?"

"Release me, sir. I will make no statement. You have stained me with your foul suspicion—we part forever."

"We do. I see it all now. You cannot weave your cunning spells around me longer. Honesty, madam, never shuns the light. I will not use to you the terms which men of the world apply to your conduct—it is enough for you to hear that I will not consent to be your plaything. Coquetry is the necessity of your sex. I might have known it. I was a fool to trust a woman—I have been betrayed, as man ever has since the beginning. You cannot toy with me, madam—I will not blow hot and cold at your girdle—nor believe in smiles that are lavished upon every new-comer—nor trust in vows stale with repetition in every conquest. How long I have been your fool I do not know—how many you have known while I was absurdly dreaming you wholly mine, I dare not think—it is sufficient that I have dragged the veil from your real self—that I know you as you are, and here and now say, farewell forever!"

I turned upon my heel and rushed away, heedless of the gasp and the low moan that followed me.

That night, crouching down in my seat with my face against the window, I sped along in the Train, with shadows down in the valleys, shadows dense and black in the forests, shadows before into which we plunged, shadows closing behind as we cut through them, shadows flying along, side and side, shadows down upon my heart and closing like a pall around my hopes; so we sped, hissing, howling, tearing, flinging space to the right and to the left; flinging mountains, and rocks, and forests, and fields to the right and to the left; flinging joy, and happiness, and peace to the right and the left; with shrieks, and cries, and moans rushing along with us; with passion striding with us, despair howling and laughing in our rear—speed on speed, breathless, frantic, fierce—but still unceasingly hurled into the shadows, shadows forever around, passions howling, tearing, racing with us.

(To be concluded).

THE BRIDGE OF THE BUSH.

I.

Worn was he, lorn was he,
Wand'ring one morn was he—
Ringing and singing
Were hazel and thrush;
There, too, a maiden,
Her white feet all laden
With daisies and dew,
By the Bridge of the Bush.

II.

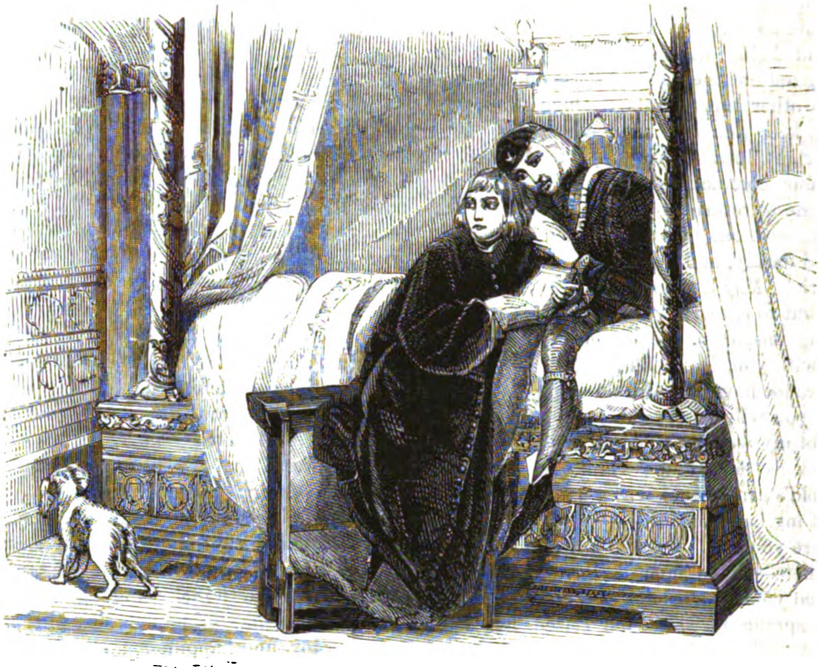
Young was she, fair was she,
Sun-tint of hair was she;
Dew-eyes, and blue as
The bosom of space:
Wild rose, ah! never,
Ye hung o'er that river
So rich as the soul-shine
Of Emily's face.

III.

Wan was he—warm was she,
Dreamless of harm was she;
Soothing and smoothing
His pillow sits she;
Kind, too, her father—
Nine long weeks together—
Till heart-whole and happy,
The wand'rer, is he.

IV.

Sue did he—woo did he,
All guile could do did he;
Sadly—yea, madly
Her soul felt the crush:—
Dark runs the water,
They've searched for their daughter—
And lone is her grave
By the Bridge of the Bush!



THE WORKS OF PAUL DELAROCHE.

It can scarcely be a subject of disputation whether the poet or the painter of any country has the greater chance of obtaining popularity among nations foreign to his own; for while the former speaks in a language, the melody and beauty of which are altogether untranslatable; the latter, for the most part, addresses himself to the entire civilized world, so that he is understood and appreciated wherever his works are seen. Hence, while the poet enjoys little reputation beyond the confines of his own land, the genius of the painter secures for him universal admiration among all, the unlearned as well as the learned, who are capable of receiving in themselves the impress of the beauties of nature. Yet while present advantages are thus far in favor of the latter, to the former belongs that enduring immortality which, save in the name, outlives the other. Many centuries of years have failed to deprive us of the thoughts and conceptions which flowed from the minds of Homer, and Æschylus, and Pindar, and Euripides; while Virgil, and Horace, and Terence, of a somewhat later date, are as familiar to the classic reader as his mother tongue; yet of the painters contemporaneous with these great writers, we know nothing but their names; not a vestige of their works has descended to us—naught but a few scanty fragments of their history, to tell us what those wonderful productions were which formed the glory of their fellow-countrymen.

Perhaps no modern historical painter has achieved a wider or more deserving popularity than Paul Delaroche, arising not less from his high attainments as an artist, than from his choice of subjects, which generally have been selected from some well-known passages of history, to which all men lay a prescriptive claim on the score of knowledge. Yet this remark must not seem to imply that his best energies were employed upon positive facts; on the contrary, the walls of the amphitheatre in Paris bear noble testimony to his great talent in dealing with Allegory and Fiction. There are too, an originality of conception and a profundity of thought to be found in his pictures, which stamp them of no peculiar school, and least of all, the French school; unlike his fellow-countryman's (H. Vernet), which bear indubitable marks of the land of their nativity. If the latter has painted the poetry and the chivalry of great actions, so has the former delineated their *morale* and their philosophy; Vernet appealing to the excited feelings of the moment, Delaroche fixing our thoughts, and offering us food for meditation. But our object, at the present time, is neither to institute comparisons between contemporary artists of the same school, nor to enter upon a critical examination of the works of P. Delaroche.

We have selected two of his pictures as subjects for illustration, and propose to glance rapidly at these, and others of his productions.

Our first illustration is from his well-known work, "The Young sons of Edward Confined in the Tower;" and of all the pictures of Delaroche it is probably the most familiar to the American public, through the medium of engravings. It is said to have originated Delvagne's tragedy on the same subject. Its popularity has been great, and very few historical pictures are so replete with intense feeling, and calculated to produce emotions so profound. There is not an incident in the whole range of history that has called forth more tears and excited deeper sympathy than this sad, sad story of the young princes, and it is much to the glory of Delaroche that his picture has come to be identified and inseparably associated with the story.

Delaroche has drawn other subjects from English history. "The Execution of Lady Jane Grey" was painted in 1834, and upon its appearance attracted universal admiration. Its composition is extremely simple—the case with all Delaroche's pictures—the group consisting only of the victim, her attendants, the minister of consolation, and the executioner, but most effectively managed; full of solemn feeling, awe, and tenderness.

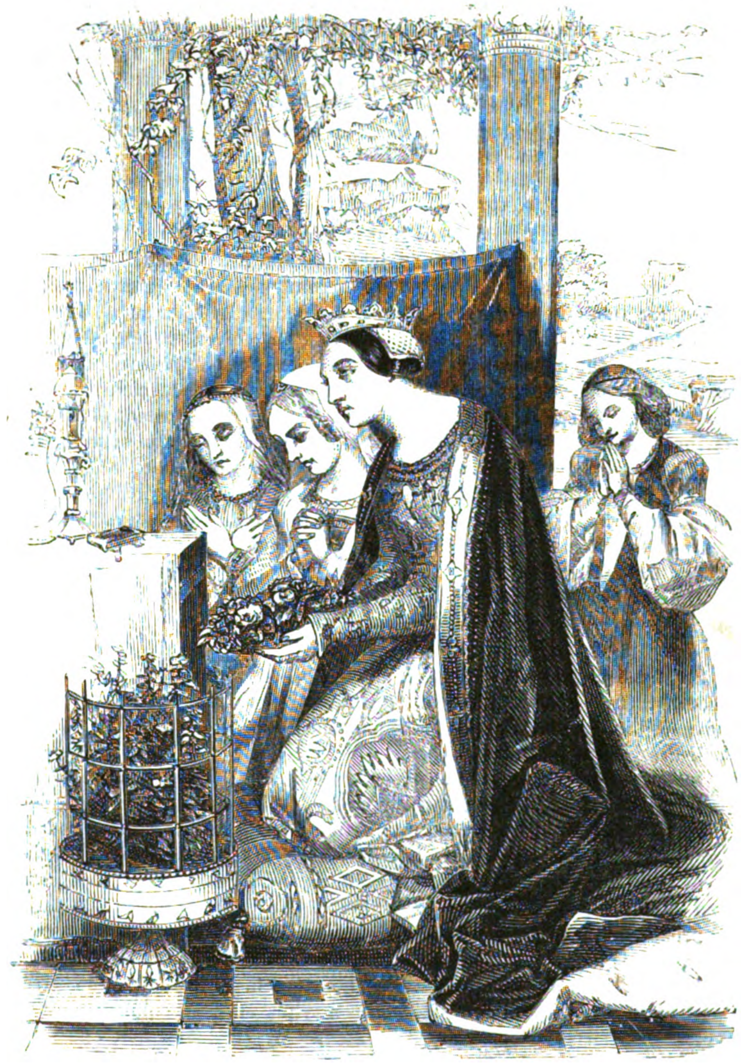
Another of his subjects from English history, is the well-known painting of "Stafford Going to Execution," which has been widely popularized by means of the engraver's art.

Our second illustration represents one of the canonized saints of "Sacred and Legendary Art"—St. Amelia; this picture was painted in the same year of the "Princes in the Tower," and was intended as the model for the great window of the chapel at the Chateau d'Eu.

Two of Paul Delaroche's pictures have been exhibited in this country—"Napoleon Crossing the Alps," and "Marie Antoinette before the Revolutionary Tribunal." This last picture only left our shores a few weeks ago. Many of our readers must have seen it at Goupil's gallery in Broadway. An engraving of it is preparing for publication, which will serve to extend its reputation far and wide over the country. The interest and admiration it excited in all who witnessed it, was profound. It was conceded to be one of the finest historical pictures in the world—a perfect epic of the pencil, grand in subject, lofty and beautiful in conception, masterly in execution.

"Napoleon Crossing the Alps" was exhibited here several years ago. Engravings from it are displayed in every shop-window, and have served to give it a wide popularity. Its conception is strikingly in contrast with the celebrated painting of Paul David on the same subject. Like all of his pictures, it is severely simple, entirely free from dramatic effect; thoughtful, close and true. In this picture, and in "Marie Antoinette," the principal charm lies in the face of Napoleon in the one case, and in that of the Queen in the other. In each instance, it is the point into which the painter threw all his genius, his strength, his soul; in each it is the face which tells the grand story, and holds the gazer fascinated before it.

The historical pictures of Delaroche have become the accepted and familiar illustrations of the stories they delineate. As in the case of Shakspeare's historical plays, his conceptions supersede the historical accounts, and passing into the subjects, exist as the world's idea and belief of those stories. This is the best, the surest, and in fact, the only test of the greatness of an historical painting—a test Delaroche has always stood.



THE FAIRY CAR.

CHAPTER I.

PROBABLY few of our readers have been in the dressing rooms attached to a theatre, for both during and after the performance of a ballet all access is guarded by a cross old porter, as tenacious of the privileges of these theatrical tiring-rooms as an old Turk. All bribery is vain, and it is only through our powers of being invisible, that we can conduct our readers to these mysterious regions.

There are three spacious rooms belonging to the *corps de ballet*, in each of which are several long glasses with large branches fastened to the walls in which gas burns. It was about five o'clock when all the young ladies of the ballet were assembled.

There were about twenty-four young girls in the three rooms, laughing, and chattering, and running about, taking off their cloaks and shawls, and preparing to make their toilet with the help of the dressers. But while the important affair of dressing is going on, there is a comparative silence, but when the light-footed flock are at last attired in their short, gauzy, fluttering garments, a spirit of mischief seems to enter into them, and all sorts of strange steps and attitudes are practised by the young ladies in so droll a manner, and amidst such noisy laughter, that the old lady who is their superintendent, is obliged to look sternly at the chief culprits through her spectacles, and desire that the racket should instantly cease. But all kinds of tricks and low tittering go on all the same. Suddenly loud exclamations are heard, for there is a sharp knock at the door. It is Monsieur Fritz, the hair-dresser of the theatre. Then the ladies in the first room seat themselves, and draw a cloak over their shoulders, that they may receive the unfortunate young man with propriety. We say "unfortunate young man" for two reasons; firstly, because it is no easy matter to dress the hair of twenty-four young girls so as to please them; and secondly, because Monsieur Fritz, having made love to some of them, he was not only decidedly repulsed, but all the others never ceased tormenting him as to his failure.

The young ladies look on the hair-dressers and tailors of a theatre as so many old women, with whom they are to be on no ceremony.

So Monsieur Fritz is admitted, and the door of the second room is closed, as the young ladies are not so far advanced in their toilet, and the important business of hair-dressing commences.

In the third room the same process goes on of scolding, laughing, and dressing, and soon, out of the chaos of tricots, embroidery, gauze, and artificial flowers, a group of well-dressed young ladies emerge, standing before the mirrors, examining their coiffure, and arranging the last folds of their dress. One of the dancers approaches the glass. She has bright black eyes and hair, and is attired, as a wood-nymph, in a bodice of pale green satin, and an excessively short green gauze petticoat; another stands beside her as a sylph, all rose color, with silver wings. She is very fair, with blue eyes and long glossy curls; she looks gentle and timid, whereas the wood-nymph looks passionate and energetic.

"Do you see," said the sylph, "how Marie sits in that corner, with tears in her eyes? Why cannot the girl be reasonable?"

"Give her time," said the wood-nymph, stretching back before the glass to see that there was no interregnum between her body and skirt. "Which of us has not felt the same? When have any of us been allowed to follow our own inclinations?"

"I have," said the sylph, "and that is why I am so sorry for Marie."

"A fine conquest, yours," said the other, laughing and curling her lip contemptuously, putting her hands on her waist, and turning round complacently before the glass. But we must speak to Marie. She must not let that old wretch of an aunt terrify her."

"Do so, Therese," said the blonde. "You know Marie is a good creature, amiable and gentle, but not energetic enough to resist constant worrying. And she has not one intimate friend."

"I shall certainly speak to her," said Therese. "I will soon manage her." With these words she tossed her head, made a half-pirouette, and then, with the proud air of an empress, approached Marie, who was seated with another young girl in an obscure corner.

Before she could address the girl, however, the ballet began. The curtain rose, the public applauded the pomp and splendor of the scene, and the story began in a brilliant ball room. The music sounded loud and inspiriting; the dancers moved quickly at first, in apparent disorder, out of which, however, the most beautiful combinations were formed. The whole stage was filled with bright-colored silks and satins, with gold and silver embroidery, with fluttering scarfs, brilliant jewels, and waving feathers.

The eyes of the spectators were quite dazzled, and had no repose till after the first scene, when the *corps de ballet* had disappeared on all sides.

After a long fatiguing scene, the poor dancers are in a state not at all dissimilar to that of young horses in training. The strongest and most enduring dance gaily off the stage behind the scenes, where they stand panting; others with difficulty reach a bench or a chair, on which they sink down breathless.

The weak and delicate, however, no sooner reach the sheltering side wings, than they seize convulsively a post or a board, and pressing their hands on their hearts, and leaning their heated foreheads against the wall, they in vain strive to recover breath, their hearts beating to suffocation.

All, however, are more or less exhausted, and even if some at this moment laugh and chatter, it is with difficulty, and with panting breasts; but the toilet and the coiffure must be attended to, and they arrange each other, one fastening on a bow, or a veil, or a scarf which has been loosened, or a curl that has strayed out of its place.

"I really must say," said Therese, who was the first to recover her breath, "the leader of the orchestra must have taken leave of his senses to-night. Did any one ever hear such mad time? The pace we were obliged to go took away my breath, and that is saying a good deal. "My poor dear," said she, turning to one of her colleagues, a delicate girl, who, pressing her head against a plank, complained of violent palpitation at her heart, "I supported you just at the right moment, but I will give that man a bit of my mind when I see him between the acts. Do you feel ill?" said she kindly, to the exhausted girl.

She shook her head, and after a few moments said, "Not exactly ill; but the exertion was too much for me, and if you, dear Therese, had not so kindly supported me, I must have sunk down. I thank you so much, Therese."

"Not at all," said she, "but I'll tell you what—you are too tight—let me unfasten your dress."

"No," said the other, "I dare not! I would gladly say I was ill, but I know if I did I should be dismissed, and then I would have no means of gaining a livelihood."

Therese shrugged her shoulders and turned away. "Poor creature!" she muttered. She then made a sign to the girl of whom she had spoken in the green-room. They placed themselves behind a large rock which was to appear in the third act. "You have something to say to me, Marie," said Therese; "Elise told me so."

"I am so glad to be able to speak to you," answered Marie; "but have we time?"

"Oh, more than a quarter of an hour. The tiresome garden scene lasts ten minutes at least, and then comes a chorus of knights and ladies, with which we have nothing to do. Well, tell me, does your aunt plague you much?"

The young girl sighed and looked down, and then said, "Do you know my aunt?"

"Indeed I do, and I detest her. Well, go on."

"What can I say? For some weeks past she has been constantly talking of the badness of the times, of the smallness of my salary. She says that my washing alone costs more than I earn, and that things can no longer go on as they have done; and latterly, she asked me why I did not get a lover!"

"You may rely upon it, she has one in view for you herself. Are you in the habit of seeing any one often, either at home or elsewhere, to whom you suspect your aunt intends to sell you?"

"No! no!" said the young girl, "no one comes near me. And yet she has some one in view."

"So!" said Theresa indignantly; "that is too cruel!"

"Is is not terrible, Therese? Oh! give me some advice. I have no one in the world whom I can confide in; no one to assist me if I refuse to obey my aunt's commands."

"It is a most base transaction," said Therese thoughtfully, "but if you know no more, it is difficult to advise you. Who is it? Have you heard no name?"

"I don't know the name, but he came once to our house, and I was working by chance in the next room, and so overheard the conversation."

"You saw him then?" "Yes." "And you don't know him?" "No." "Is he young?" "Not very—about thirty. But I can point him out to you, for he is in the theatre."

"Oh! that is lucky," said Therese, laughing; "we will take a survey of him between the acts, and if I know the person I can soon tell you what there is to fear."

Here the conversation ended, for the inspector called out at this moment, "Ladies, the third tableau is beginning.

It was lucky that the solo dancers were busy dressing between the acts, for otherwise the two mysterious holes in the curtain would not have been vacant. And even as it was, Therese was obliged to use all her authority to chase away half a dozen spectres who were to appear in the last act. Then she placed Marie before her, and said, "Now look through and tell me where he is sitting."

Marie did so, and said, "In the box next the fourth pillar."

Therese looked steadily, and then answered, "Oh! Marie, you must be mistaken. It cannot possibly be the gentleman in that box. Perhaps the one you mean is just gone. Look again."

Marie glanced over her friend's shoulder, and said, "Yes, he is sitting there now. See! he appears tired. and is leaning his head on his hand."

"Exactly so! And you are sure there is no mistake?"

"How can I be mistaken? I have seen him several times, and I recognized him at once. So you know who he is? And the lady seated beside him?"

"The lady is his affianced wife. A fine history, certainly!"

"That is indeed terrible!" exclaimed Marie. "What shall I do, Therese? Oh, help me!"

Therese reflected for a few moments, and then said, "I know what to do. The hypocrite!"

"So you know him?" said Marie.

"Yes, I know who he is, though I have never spoken to him: he is one of those canting villains who shrug their shoulders if any one speaks of the ballet. Besides, I have an affair of my own to revenge there. You know my sister is a seamstress; she tried to obtain employment in that man's house. Madame, his mother, was quite disposed to patronize her, and my sister was delighted at the prospect of being able to earn something; but that man said he preferred a girl of more respectable connections. More respectable!" said the dancer, indignantly. "That was five years ago, and the reflection cast on the family was all on my account; and though I was as innocent and good a girl as any in this house, still I was a ballet-dancer, and therefore a lost and despicable creature! But now I will have my turn."

"What am I to do?"

"At present do nothing; but take care to inform me of the progress of the affair," said Therese. "Ah!

ah!" said she, laughing, and making a little saucy courtesy towards curtain, "you choose, sir, to interfere with the ballet-dancers, do you!"

In the next act there was a change of costume among the ballet-girls. Marie hastened to complete her toilet, which she did by fastening a little hat with flowers coquettishly on the left side of her head. Her thick masses of hair looked very luxuriant, and as she saw herself in the glass she privately thought she looked very tolerable. And there she was right, for she was a pretty little engaging creature from head to foot.

Well satisfied with herself, she tripped down stairs, and as she came on the stage she cast a searching look all round, perhaps to find Therese—perhaps not. Indeed, the latter appears to us most probable, for Therese was standing close to her, leaning on a side-scene, and talking to one of the actors. But Marie went toward that part of the stage where the machinery is regulated.

Richard, the young carpenter, who was Marie's lover, was occupied at the farthest end in throwing a rope over a rock; and if he did so very awkwardly he had some excuse, for his eyes were not regarding either rope or rock, but tenderly fixed on Marie, who in her turn remarked Richard, but affected only to be crossing the stage. Richard let go the rope in his hand, which fell to the ground with a considerable clatter; consequently the dancer started at the noise, and looked round to see what had caused it.

"Oh, Marie, forgive me," said the young carpenter; "I could not help it. When I saw you coming, the rope slipped out of my hand."

"Oh, it is you, Richard," said the girl; "I really thought something was falling on my head. It is quite dangerous to walk here for fear of an accident. The director says they happen constantly."

"It is long since any accident has happened during the ballet," said Richard. "We are particularly careful then, believe me."

"And why are you so particularly careful, Richard, during the ballet? I suppose an accident at that time would not distress you more than at any other?"

"Perhaps not some of us; but I have a peculiar interest in the ballet, Marie. And when you are in a flying car," said he, smiling, "I examine the ropes and wires minutely myself, and have my eyes on every thing."

"I am very grateful to you," said Marie. "It is very pleasant to know that there is some one who feels a little interest in you when you are on the stage."

"Don't say a little interest," said the carpenter; "say a very great interest. You know it is so Marie, and not only when you are on the stage, but every where —in the street, at home, wherever I see you or don't see you."

"Why, I declare, Richard, you are making me a regular declaration."

"Call it what you choose, Marie, but the fact you know well, though I have not spoken so plainly hitherto, for you dancers are a strange race—full of caprice and coquetry. But I will not believe, Marie, that you will act thus to me."

Now we must mention that this declaration was not quite as sudden in Marie's eyes as a flash of lightning which darts through the pure sky. The young carpenter had already given her various proofs of his interest, always watching her ascents and descents through trapdoors as a fairy, or a good spirit, and always trying the ropes with his own weight first for greater security. He was the only son of a man who was well off in the world, very handsome, and so clever in his trade that the mechanism of the theatre was intrusted chiefly to his care, and he was sure of employment there.

What joy Marie felt when Richard told her plainly he loved her! What an escape from the schemes of her unprincipled aunt, to become the wife of so excellent a young man!

While these thoughts were passing through her mind, we suppose she had not remarked that Richard had seized both her hands, and was trying to look into her downcast eyes. But the sound of applause in the theatre startled her out of her reverie, and Richard said:

"Now, Marie, do you like me or not? Will you be my wife, or have you grand love affairs in your head, like the others? Do you prefer a short, gay life of luxury, to the love of an humble, but honest man!"

"Oh, no, no!" said Marie, "indeed I do not, Richard!"

"And I believe you," said he, kindly. "I believe you to be true and honest, and it is indeed a miracle you should be so, living with such an aunt. But if you give me your consent the affair is settled, and I will come to-morrow to your aunt, to speak a few serious words to the old dragon. But, Marie, if you promise to be mine, be careful that no one shall be able to say an evil word of you. Now, what do you say?"

"Yes, yes," said Marie. "I do like you, Richard; and have no fears about my conduct. You know how truly I dislike the levity of many of my companions."

"Amen!" said he. "If it were not so contrary to the rules of the theatre, you should give me a kiss; but I will get one afterward. Adieu, Marie."

He then returned to his rope, and Marie flew across the stage, and sank down in a distant corner on a turf bank under a group of painted palm-trees. Why she folded her hands and wept we know not.

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CHAPTER II.

It was opera night again. Therese was standing before a mirror—a young fairy—and very handsome she looked; and she seemed very much satisfied with herself, if you could judge by the well-pleased glances she cast at herself in the glass. One of her colleagues, a pale, delicate-looking girl, in the dress of a court-lady, sat near her, fanning herself, and looking occasionally at the handsome Therese with an expression not quite free from envy.

Elsie and Marie were in their usual corner, and the former was evidently, with her sweet voice, saying consoling words to her companion. Marie was the picture of grief and despair, and the hardest heart could not have resisted asking the cause of her sorrow. Her dark hair was hanging neglected over her shoulders down to her lap, and her head was bent, her hands were clasped, and quivered when the scalding tears, which fell incessantly from her eyes, dropped on them.

"It is time, dear Marie," said Elsie, quietly, "to arrange your hair. Do cease weeping. My heart aches for you. At least, speak to me. Have you no longer any confidence in my friendship?"

"Oh, yes! yes!" sobbed Marie, with difficulty; "but you cannot comprehend my misery. Till now, I never had a secret from you, but this I cannot tell you."

"Speak to Therese, then. Here she comes. She will arrange your hair, and I will go into the next room."

Marie made no answer, but she raised her head languidly, and on seeing Therese, she pressed her hands to her face with a fresh burst of tears.

"Marie, dear Marie!" said Therese, "what on earth has happened? But I am not surprised."

Marie looked round, and when she saw that Elsie was gone, she sprang up, and grasping her companion's hand convulsively, she said, "Therese, I am lost!"

"Come, it can't be so bad as that," answered the other; "do compose yourself: don't let all the world know what has passed. That fool, Fritz, and one of the dressers have already looked in; so do sit down and let me dress your hair, for you will be wanted soon on the stage. And now tell me what has happened without preface. I think I can guess what it is."

"Yes, you know it," said Marie; "the same persecution I told you of before."

"That hypocrite we saw in the fourth box?"

"The same. My aunt spoke of him incessantly to me. I told her of Richard and our love, but she was frantic, and said she had not taken me as a helpless child, and educated me so well, to become the wife of a carpenter; it was abominable ingratitude on my part, and if she were obliged to force me to a more brilliant lot she would not hesitate to do so. The man came, too, once or twice, stealing to the house in twilight, and my aunt forced me to sit quiet to listen to his fine speeches. Once my aunt left the room for a time, but he saw so plainly my abhorrence that he did not venture to approach me. This happened more than once. He wished to make me a present on Christmas-eve, but I refused to see him; still he persisted in sending me gloves."

"Make haste," said Therese; "there is no time to lose."

"Yesterday afternoon," continued Marie, in a low voice, "my aunt went out, as she often does. I was quite alone in the room—indeed, almost alone in that large house, for you know that the people who live there go out to work during the day, and only return at night. Then he came. Oh, Heavens! Therese."

Marie now burst into a fresh flood of tears, and was so violently agitated that Therese was obliged to drop the long plaits of hair which she was trying to wind round her head.

"Well," said the other, "you, my poor child, did your best to repulse him."

"I did, indeed; but help came that will prove my destruction!"

"Richard came in?"

"No, Delton. He was sent to announce to-day's opera."

"But you were saved from the person of this man."

"But to what purpose? I am equally lost in Richard's eyes. The wretch rushed off instantly, turning aside his head so that Delton could not recognize him."

"Wretch indeed!"

"Delton remained standing at the door, stammered out his message, and then said, sorrowfully, 'Oh, Mademoiselle Marie, I never could have believed such a thing of you!'"

"Does he know your engagement to Richard?" asked Therese, anxiously.

"Certainly not; but—forgive me, Therese, for saying so—you know Delton has always said he preferred Elsie and me to all the others, because we were both well-conducted and had no lovers. He said we were sure to do well."

"You must explain this affair to him, and that as soon as possible."

"He won't even look at me," answered the weeping girl; "he shrugs his shoulders and gets out of my way. The others will soon perceive that; they will lay their heads together, and mock me. Richard will hear it, and alas! he has a thousand times said to me, 'Marie, so long as you conduct yourself virtuously, and that no man can say a word against you, so long you are mine and I am yours in body and soul, but be doubly careful.'"

"It is a pity you did not confide the affair to him," said Therese, shaking her head. "I fear it is a bad business."

"Oh, how often I thought of doing so, but I was afraid both of my aunt and of Richard himself, he is so jealous a disposition. Help me, Therese, and advise me."

"I will do both gladly, but first of all I must speak to Delton. But I know him well; when anything vexes him he hides during the whole evening. When we are going home in the carriage at night, however, he can't get out of my way, and I will then tell him the truth."

In the meantime, Elsie had returned into the room to remind the others that it was time to finish dressing. Therese had fastened up Marie's long glossy hair, and placed a scarlet pomegranate flower on each side.

Marie was now dressed, and when the bell sounded, Therese walked, in her usual stately fashion, first, and the others followed her.

The overture begun, and Therese crossed the half-dark stage toward the background, where her place was in the first scene of the opera. She looked round on very side for Delton, but he was nowhere to be seen.

After the overture and the first scene were at an end, during which the sky shone in indescribable splendor, the group of dancers looked most captivating, but unfortunately the brilliant sky-blue light being rather too dark, made the cherubim look in a state of collapse, and the thunder lasted rather too long. Then the scene changed. As this was to remain during the whole act, the usual rendezvous under the stage was soon thickly peopled.

"Is the fairy car at the end of the piece in good order, Richard?" asked one.

"I will answer for that," was the answer. "I tried it thoroughly this afternoon; it goes as if oiled."

"And who is to hold the large rope which steadies the whole machine? Everything depends on that, for if it is allowed to give way an inch, the whole affair will tumble down, and then good night to this world for any one standing on it."

"Don't be afraid," answered the young carpenter. "I am to hold the rope myself, and when once I have grasped it, the whole ballet may stand on it safely."

"The poor dancers must have a good share of courage, too," said a second; "it is no joke to be on a machine suspended by a couple of wires, or one rope, and to see down two stories under the stage."

"Oh! they are accustomed to it," said Richard, "and don't think at all about it."

During the second and third acts this place was cleared of every one, for there were to be many changes on the stage. Much thunder and lightning, waterfalls which were obliged to be unremittingly turned, and troubled seas with heavy waves, when all who could be mustered together crept under the large sheet of canvas painted to represent water, and were obliged to jump up and down under it like frogs, to keep the waves in constant motion.

Therese, whether by chance or intention on the part of Delton, had not yet been able to speak to him, for each time she saw him he seemed too busy with the carpenters to look round.

Marie had only seen Richard for an instant the whole evening, when at the end of the first act he had helped her out of her fairy car, and pressed her hand tenderly, saying, "Dear Marie, how lovely you look this evening. When we are married, you must dress your hair just so, and I will find the scarlet flowers for you."

The last act came. The first scenes were played in a narrow space, so as to give plenty of room for the grand flying car. The large space under the stage was opened for this purpose, and we beg our kind reader to look down into it. It is dimly lighted, and full of ropes, wires, ladders, steps, apparatus for raising and sinking machines through the trap-door. This is an important place for all melodramas and fairy pieces, for hence issue underground and spirits' voices; the winds howl from its deep recesses. From here tongues of flame issue out of the depths of the earth, when an evil spirit rises to the surface; and angels and demons ascend from this spot.

It is usually very dark, and only lighted by two dim lamps; but in this evening's opera, where all the brightness of the celestial regions, and all the terrors of Lucifer are to be displayed, there was sufficient light to distinguish the objects around, and the largest trap-door being open, a bright light came through the aperture.

Richard was standing with his rope, and Delton, who had nothing to do at that moment, was seated near him on the steps. The closing scene approached, and six men set in motion the flying car. A bright light was to blaze in the whole sky, and as a finale, the fairy Amorosa, the protectress of true love, was to emerge from the centre of its radiance on a cloud twenty feet higher than the car. There were first two long scenes; and when, as an introduction to them, the orchestra played soft aerial music, Delton took out his snuff-box and offered Richard a pinch, who accepted it laughing, and said, "I can still make use of one hand; but afterward, when I must support my fairy securely in the sky, I shall require both hands, and to put forth all my strength. Looking upward from this gloomy spot," continued he, after a pause, "I must say the fairies are very bewitching. How handsome Therese looks to-night!"

"Oh! I have seen that kind of thing times without number," said Delton, crossly. "There is no delusion for me. I fetch them from their homes, and shove them into the carriage afterward, too often, to be taken in by their stage attractions."

"You ought to consider yourself very fortunate, I think."

"Oh! they are all indifferent to me, and always will be so," answered the old man, gravely. "It vexes me to be obliged to see all their levity and follies, poor things! They come here at first with the best resolutions to remain good and honest; they do resist for a time, but—the temptations are too great. I pity the young creatures from my heart! Here in velvet and silk, in pomp and splendor—at home in poverty and misery. Then come proposals and promises of a brilliant future, and then—body and soul are purchased! It is heart-breaking."

Richard looked upward again, and the dazzling light, the silk, the gold, the false jewels, the rosy cheeks, and the sparkling eyes seemed to him less brilliant."

"I do think it is most sad," said he. "But there are some among them who are well conducted. For instance, your two favorites, Elsie and Marie," continued he, laughing; "I know you would go through fire and water for either of them."

"Richard!" called out a voice through the speaking-trumpet, "the highest car in the clouds will move immediately. Lay hold of the rope. When I call out to you, seize it firm and hold it fast. Don't let it give way a hair's-breadth."

"No fear!" cried Richard, gayly. "Now come here, Delton. Just look how pretty your favorite, Marie, looks!"

"I never want to see her again," said the other, turning away his head.

"What's that you are saying?" said Richard, starting and turning his head round. "That you never wished to see Marie again?"

"Yes, I said so," answered he. "But what's that to you? What need you care for the follies of these girls at home?"

In the anxious hope of hearing more, Richard affected indifference, and said, "To be sure it is nothing to me, and I only asked because no one has ever yet said one word against Marie—not a syllable! You must admit that?"

"Till now, I have always been the first to say so."

These words "till now" struck like a dagger into the heart of the young carpenter. He trembled violently, and everything seemed to become black before his eyes. Breathing with difficulty, he said:

"'Till now,' Delton? What do you mean?"

"I don't choose to explain."

"Come, come," said Richard, "don't excite my curiosity for nothing."

"Well, then, till yesterday," said Delton, out of all patience. And after looking up at the pretty Marie, he continued, "And how innocent the girl looks! Since yesterday, however, I have good proof—that of my own eyes—that she is as bad as any of them."

At this moment the voice of the head machinist was heard calling out, "Steady below! and when I call again, hold fast the rope!"

The Bengal lights blazed up in their red splendor, and threw a radiance even under the stage, streaming through all the joints of the planks and trap-doors, and down below the whole theatre seemed to be on fire. Then sounded flutes and harps, and soft music accompanied the gradual ascent of the protectress of true love. There was a general exclamation of delight from the public. "Steady!" was again shouted through the speaking-tube, and Richard seized the rope, and held it with all his strength. But his thoughts were not there—not even with the fairy Amorosa—all his ideas were concentrated in Delton, who now composedly related how he had yesterday gone to Marie's home to announce the opera, that he knocked, but received no answer. "I then," continued he, "opened the door, and found Marie alone, that is, without her aunt, for a well-dressed gentleman was with her—"

"Marie!" cried Richard, in a tone of agony. He threw up his hands, and uttered a dreadful cry, which was echoed by a terrific scream of agony from above. The music stopped, a hundred voices were heard exclaiming and shouting. There was a crash on the stage, as if the floor were giving way; and a heavy mass came tumbling down at the feet of Richard—a mass of planks and ropes, and among them the body of a poor young girl, who a second before had shone forth in all her youth and beauty, and now lay motionless and dead.

"Marie!" cried Delton, rushing to her, and lifting her gently in his arms. And kneeling down, he supported her head against his shoulder.

"Heaven willed that—not I," muttered Richard, in a tone of desperation. He staggered back, and would have fallen if he had not supported himself by clinging to the iron pillars. All those belonging to the theatre came rushing down steps and ladders—in short, all who were on the stage—to ascertain the extent of the misfortune. Therese was among the first. She shuddered at sight of the death-like aspect of the poor girl, lately so blooming; then she seized Richard's arm, and said; "You did that on purpose; you are her murderer!" She had seen Delton, and guessed the conversation that had taken place.

"No! no!" said Richard, in a hoarse whisper. "You are unjust. I don't know how the rope slipped out of my hands."

"And did Delton tell you nothing?"

"Yes, unfortunately I did," said the latter, who overheard her question.

"Oh, dreadful! dreadful!" cried Therese, sobbing loudly, and throwing herself on her knees beside Marie. "Poor, poor creature! But perhaps it is best so!" She gently rubbed her forehead, and dried some drops of blood which oozed slowly from her pale lips.

In a few minutes a circle of horror-struck faces surrounded the unfortunate girl. Many voices called for a surgeon, but it was long before one could be found.

The circle opened as the doctor came down the steps, and there was a death-like silence as he gently raised the head of the insensible girl, felt her limbs, and looked into her glassy eyes. There was not a sound, and every eye was fixed on the surgeon. When he shook his head mournfully, and whispered some words to the manager, who stood close to him, all saw that there was no hope. The dancers, who had withdrawn a little way from poor Marie, now hurried to her side, all weeping, kissing her hands and the plaits of her long glossy hair, which had fallen down, and in which the pomegranate flowers were still blooming and fresh.

"But how did this dreadful accident happen?" cried the manager, who was pressing his hands convulsively together; "whose duty was it to hold the rope?"

At this question all withdrew from Richard's side, leaving him standing alone, his face livid, and his eyes distended.

"It was I who did it!" said he, after a pause. Suddenly his eyes wandered, his hands clutched the air as if trying to seize something, his knees gave way, and if some of the workmen had not caught him he would have fallen to the ground; but his companions let him down gradually, and laid his head on one of the steps. He never lifted it again.

SUNSET.

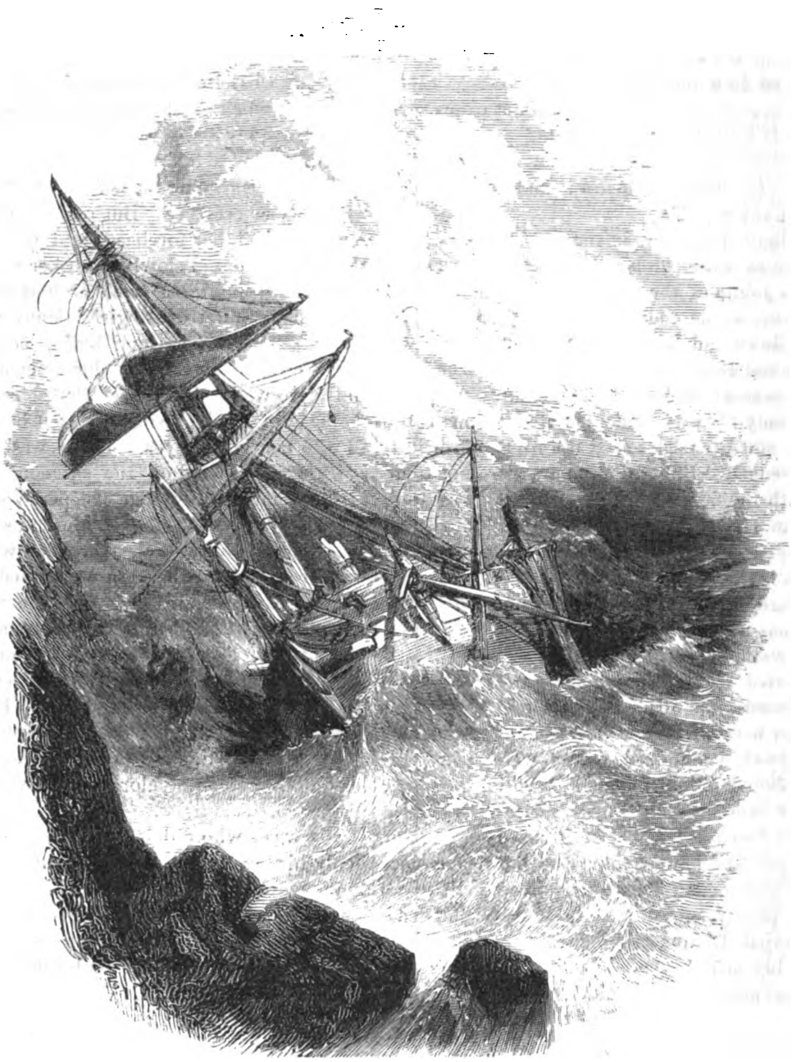
How like a dying hero sets yon sun,
    While stains the western skies a crimson flood—
Some giant champion, who, the victory won,
    Faints in the sea of his own generous blood:
    This morn he leapt the eastern steeps and stood
Flushed with past triumphs—flashing through the skies
    Unswerving gleams, vaunt-couriers of sure good,
Then strode blue fields to conquest, conquering dies,
Bless'd by the world's big heart, and watch'd by wistful eyes.

THE CONVICT SHIP.*

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

He stood upon the emerald strand,
  Which gave his sires a kingly birth,
An exile from his native land,
  A sentenced wanderer o'er the earth.
No, not the earth! or he had found
  A spot where free-born souls could dwell.

Away upon the shadowy stream
  A prison ship, with spectral shrouds,
Like phantom vessels in a dream,
  Floated between the waves and clouds;
And friends looked sternly on the deep,
  For kindred blood rose wild and high,



Like common felons, he was bound
  A slave beyond the ocean's swell—
The slave of England's haughty power—
  A branded convict by the laws—
The hero of one glorious hour—
  The martyr of a deathless cause.

And grief, so proud it might not weep,
  Burned fiercely in each lurid eye;
Thus stung with grief and mute with rage,
  That band drew close to where he stood,
The victim of a faithless age—
  Sublime in their firm brotherhood.

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* Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S., for the Southern District of New York.

Advance! The fatal word is given;
A sob goes swelling through the crowd;
He lifts his trembling hands to Heaven;
His voice is mournful, deep, and loud.

Oh, God!—I sought but to be free!
If the deep bondage of this land
May centre all its ills on me,
Then let me perish where I stand!
The blood of many a kingly sire,
Has reddened on my native sod;
The light of many a martyr's fire
Has sent its life-smoke up to God!
And I, her son, was it a crime
To seize the chains that mar her breast,
And scatter back the wrongs that Time
Has rusted round her emerald crest?

A crime! While Ireland in her chains
Against oppression toils and strives,
Each ruddy drop within my veins,—
Though vital with a thousand lives,—
Let forth by this too willing hand
If that could rend one link apart,
Should redden down this thirsty sand,
The old wine of a broken heart.
Ireland, my country, what is she?
And what am I? A convict slave!
An hour, and that remorseless sea
Will bear me to a felon's grave.
"Onward!" The guards file slowly past;
His pulse beats, like a muffled knell,
As dead leaves in the wintry blast,
His lifted hands unlocked and fell.

But hark! A tumult in the crowd—
Murmurs of anguish and surprise;
For onward like a drifting cloud,
That from a tempest wildly flies—
The wife appears! A little child
Lies struggling in her firm embrace,
And lifts his eyes so wide and wild,
In terror to her pallid face.
She knows not that her brow is bare,
Nor feels the moist wind wander through
The golden splendor of her hair,
That shades those eyes of burning blue—
Nor heeds the boy, but firmer girds
His cries and struggles to her heart.
She utters neither groan nor words,
But, with white cheek and lips apart,
Moves slowly through the breathless throng,
That yields, with sympathy profound,
A passage as she glides along,
In search of that brave outward bound.

The convict sees her on the strand,
With one great pang of more than joy,
He turns upon the soldiers band:
"Stop! Yonder are my wife and boy!"
Then, like a panther from its glade,
He braves the bayonet's deadly clash,
And flings aside each gleaming blade
With a fierce bound and lightning dash.
She sees him. Like a wounded doe,
All wild with bliss and mad with pain,
Springs to his arms: "I go—I go!
What power shall part us two again?
Yes, fold us closer—closer, love—
In me thou has told Ireland yet;
I tell thee any land shall prove
Native to us. Thy eyes are wet—
This great heart swells against my own,
Its holy anguish pleads for me—
Ah! could ye leave us here alone,
To perish looking on that sea?"

Breathless she gazed into his face,
And lifted from her heart the child—
Relieved from her too fond embrace,
The boy looked up and softly smiled.
The convict turned. *They* should not know
How close the tears rose to his eyes—
How sweet the love—how deep the woe,
Brought to his soul by this surprise.

"Advance!" Again that dread command
Rolls, trumpet-like, along the shore,
Guarded by England's soldier band
They leave old Ireland evermore.

They stood together on that gloomy deck,
Straining each gaze to catch another sight
Of that dim shore that, like a cloudy speck,
Lay dark and sombre in the morning light.
Ah, it was very mournful. All around
The weltering sea heaved with a hollow moan,
And from the hold arose the dreary sound
Of smothered tears and many a broken groan;
For that old battered prison-ship was full,
And freighted deep with misery and tears,
From the tall spars down to the creaking hull,
She reeled and trembled as with human fears.
They stood together, silently and still,
Their eyes turned shoreward with a dreary gaze,
The winds swept wailing by them, fierce and chill,
And there lay Ireland mourning in the haze.
Then all at once his mustering grief awoke:
"Oh for a grave beneath my native sod!"
Thus on the wailing air his anguish broke.
"I ask but this—but this, Almighty God!"

As if the heavens themselves had heard,
The passion of that cry,
The moaning deep was fiercely stirred;
The waves rose white and high.

The clouds in one broad thunder fold,
Swept blackly through the air,
Like a great pall of death unrolled
By angels answering there.

Blacker and blacker glooms the front of heaven,
And in its wrath sweeps the recoiling sea,
Hither and yon the angry waves are driven,
Like routed war steeds, rushing to be free.
In mad battalions, with their white manes streaming,
They trample down the bosom of the deep;
Sharp, fiery lances through the clouds are gleaming,
And strike the waters where they foam and leap.

And then was torn that inky cloud,
With storms of lurid rain;

And heaven's artillery thundered loud
Above the heaving main.
It seemed as if the stars at last,
Retreating in their ire,
Had poured upon the raging blast
Great cataracts of fire.

Like a wild desert steed beneath the lash,
The tortured vessel plunges madly on;
The masts have fallen with a smother'd crash,
Her guards are broken, and her strength is gone.
The waves leap, rioting, across her deck,
The helpless crew are swept from where they clung,
With a faint death-hold, to the plunging wreck,
Her tattered canvas to the storm is flung.

Onward, still onward, anchorless and bare,
She reels and toils toward the rocky shore,
Her hold sends forth its shrieks of fell despair,
Like fiery arrows piercing through the roar.

The exiles kneel together—His embrace
Girds in the unconscious boy and pallid wife,
A mighty gladness brightens on his face,
Hope comes with death, and slavery with life.

It comes! it comes! that rushing mountain now,
And lifts the shuddering vessel on its breast,
Quick, vivid flashes curl around her prow,
And wreathe the masts with many a fiery crest.

A plunge, a quick recoil, one fearful cry!
She strikes—she strikes—the rock—oh, God—the rock!
Amid the waters raging to the sky;
That clinging group go downward with the shock.

'Tis over—from behind that parted cloud
The frightened moon sheds down a timid gleam.
With the white foam around her, like a shroud,
Through which her golden locks all dimly stream,
That gentle mother clasps her lifeless child,
Folded upon the marble of her breast,
There in his pallid death the infant smiled,
As if he lay caressing and caressed.

With his cold face half veiled beneath her hair,
Cast to her side by a relenting wave,
The sire and husband had his answered prayer—
The Irish Patriot filled an Irish Grave.

MY LITTLE GODSON.

I HAD just gone to housekeeping in the dear old mansion where my husband was born. We had been two years abroad and this was really the commencement of our home life. The old mansion with its antique furniture, the fine old forest trees that overshadowed it, the lawn glowing with flowers, the distant river, all these made up our little paradise. There was but one thing wanting, and that we never spoke of. Vane and I were alone in the old house. There was room enough for a dozen children, but we were childless. This was the only shadow that fell across our threshold when we passed over it.

We had hardly got settled when a letter came from Cousin Selina, who had been married the same year with ourselves, saying that we might expect them immediately, on a visit of some weeks. Her husband was one of the most splendid fellows in the world, and she the most perfect little beauty you ever set eyes on.

How proud and how happy I felt at the idea of receiving these dear guests; of showing them, and doing them the honors, of my beloved old Woodlands. Breakfast was hardly concluded, when Vane hurried on my garden-hat, and with his old boyish impetuosity in all that interested him, or concerned those he loved, drew me out to inspect the grounds, and see what arrangements or improvements could be made to add to their beauty. In truth, it seemed difficult. Fortunately the spring was particularly fine and advanced, and already many of the earlier roses had anticipated June, and were, with a variety of other summer flowers, bursting into luxuriant bloom.

Still, Vane thought, art must help nature a little on an occasion when the place he loved as well as I did, *our* home, was to be displayed to such guests; and a thousand fancies, some of which I approved, some I could hardly avoid laughing at, were suggested by him for its adornment. "Don't you think, Eve," he asked, "if we were to collect a lot of glow-worms off the lawn, and put them here in this little plot where the flower-beds are, in front of the drawing-room windows; they would stay and look so pretty at night among the flowers?—let us get some to-night!" It was impossible for me to keep my countenance at this proposition, and he looked disappointed—even a little vexed. "How dare you laugh at me, you little monster; I'm sure it would be charming; it would look like the valley of diamonds!—but you're always thwarting me; I hate your sensible people who have no imaginations;—no—don't put your arm though mine, and look up in that coaxing way! I don't like you, I won't kiss you; this is the third time to-day I have seen you smile when I suggested an improvement; you thought I didn't see you, but I did, and I won't bear it any longer!" I drew my arm quickly from his, turned my back and bent my head, so that my hat quite concealed my face from him; he came up and stole his arm softly round me and tried to raise my head, but I resisted, and kept my face averted, though it was difficult for me to conceal my laughter. "What, you're sulky, too?—there, I'll forgive you this once, Eve, do you hear?—come, we'll make friends;—by Jove, I believe the little minx thinks I'm to beg *her* pardon! Well, then, I will, I do, Eve; I'll never do it again—never, never any more—will that do, or must I go down on my knees?" I could hold out no longer, and burst into a fit of merry laughter; he joined me, calling me a spoilt tyrant, a little take-in, who would make anybody believe I was a dove, instead of the fiercest hen that ever pecked her unhappy mate into a condition of the most abject slavery.

The great glow-worm question being disposed of, we went into the house to decide upon what arrangements should there be made for the coming guests.

The time appointed brought Selina and Reginald. The former was naturally fatigued from her journey, though well and in excellent spirits. What sunshine her bright face brought into the house as she entered it! "So, this is Woodlands at last!" she said as she looked round; "it's the nicest place I ever saw in my life; how glad I am to find myself here in it, and with you, you two dears!" and she looked from one to the other of us, holding out to each a little white hand, and gazing through eyes humid with affection. "How well you look, my Evelyn, and how happy! Reginald, look at her, and tell me if she isn't the loveliest creature you ever saw in your life! You needn't blush—you are, and it makes me so happy to see it, that I should like to tell you so every time I look at you?"

When did a happier party sit down round a dinner-table than the one that day assembled at Woodlands? My husband was in one of those fits of wild frolicsome spirits that came over him occasionally; a thousand fantastic fancies, glowing descriptions, brilliant sallies, curious stories, perfect imitations, flowed forth in endless succession; and we, delighted, laughed and listened, never wearied, though it had gone on till morning; for even in the most entire freedom of Vane's gaiety, there was always a *finesse*, a point, a somewhat refined, that prevented its ever becoming overpowering, as mere animal spirits hardly ever fail to do.

It required some exertion of Reginald's authority to induce Selina to retire to her room at a reasonable hour after the fatigues of her journey, so unwilling was she to break up the party. However, I joined in his exhortations, and we carried the point. I accompanied her to her apartment, but she was too excited to go to bed at once, as I wished her to do. She wandered about the room, examining the pictures, the ornaments; sat down, got up again, laughed, clapped her hands, kissed me with childlike vehemence, patted my cheeks; while I, laughing and chiding, gazed on her beaming brown eyes, her glowing cheeks, the dimples coming and going about her rosy mouth, and thought I had never seen a creature so beautiful. At last I succeeded in calming her and inducing her to go to rest.

"I will," she said, "if you'll sit by me till I'm asleep. I promised, and she then lay down, I sitting beside the bed watching, as a mother watches her child. At first she moved restlessly, stretching and throwing her arms about outside the coverlet; occasionally speaking and smiling at me, but finding I only shook my head in reply, she at last resigned herself to sleep; the little rosy-white hands were folded, palm to palm, beneath her warm cheek; the dark eyes that had wandered about so restlessly, settled; the fringed lids drooped, raised themselves languidly, fell again, trembled, and finally dosed; the respiration became deeper, the lips parted, showing a gleam of pearly teeth, and she slept. The door opened softly, and Reginald entered; at a sign from me, he stole to the bedside and looked at her: oh, what depths of unutterable tenderness spoke through his eyes as he gazed on the fair young face of his wife.

She seemed conscious of his presence. A smile broke over her slumber, and her lips half-syllabled his name.

With a cordial good-night, and anticipations of a happy morrow, we parted, and I rejoined Vane in the drawing-room.

In the morning, I sent to know how Selina had passed the night, after the fatigues of her journey: she had never had a better, was the satisfactory reply; and I had hardly arrived in the breakfast-room, before down she came, radiant as the May morning, with a little blue-ribboned coquettish apology for a cap, half containing, without concealing, her sunny hair. Kissing me gleefully, and telling me how well she was, and how happy and how hopeful, she passed through the open French window on to the broad woodbine-garlanded verandah, followed by Fay—Fay, ever faithful, fond, and fat; a little sobered by age, but still with energy enough left to scamper and bark vehemently at nothing at all, when he found himself out in the open air. There she stood, *enivrée*—I can find no English word to express it—with happiness, with sunshine, with bird-music, with the breath of the wind through the trees—elm and maple, and horse-chestnut—and

"The lime, the summer-house of murmurous wings,"

with

"The one warm gust, full-fed with perfume"

of honeysuckle, hawthorn, mignionette, hyacinth—all Spring's wealth of sweetest odors. What a happy time it was—what a happy, bright, blessed time! Ah, well, it is something to have known it—something to have one sunny island in life's dark sea to rest the memory upon; for I hold that even when the happiness we once possessed has fled, the recollection of it, instead of darkening by contrast the present, helps to take us out of it, and gives us many hours of relief; not perhaps at first, but later, when time has cast a bridge over the abyss that yawned between happiness and misery, and softened with his own quiet half tints the gorgeous glories of the one, and the black and ghastly glooms of the other.

Vane and Reginald, who had been paying a matutinal visit to the stables, came in, and we all sat down to breakfast—a breakfast with fresh eggs, laid by my own pet fancy hens, game, golden, Polish, Spanish, all sorts of fine ladies of hens; preserved fruits made by Elizabeth, my old nursery-maid, now promoted to the rank of house-keeper; hot home-made rolls; cream and butter from my pretty thoroughbred Alderney cows—fine-limbed, large-eyed, gentle creatures, that waited of a morning for the handful of salt with which I was wont to regale them; honey from the beehives ranged along the south wall in the kitchen garden, and early strawberries from the beds planted in front of them. Selina, who was not the least ashamed of having a good appetite, no less than Reginald, enjoyed our "home produce;" and we lounged, loitering and talking long and pleasantly over the meal.

Then we strolled forth into the garden; not one of my particular pet flowers escaping Selina's notice: visited the dove-cotes, whose inhabitants I had so tamed, that, whenever I appeared, they flocked round, perching on my head, my arm, my shoulders; and ended the survey with a peep into the stables. Then, fearing to fatigue Selina, I took her into the house, and we sat together in the morning-room, chatting over a thousand pleasant topics till the hour came for us to drive out in the carriage.

There was a natural grace and graciousness about Selina's manner—a child-like confidence that I never saw any one capable of resisting; and this it was which rendered her visit so delightful.

Selina soon fell into the habit of passing a certain portion of the morning in her own sitting-room, sometimes alone, sometimes with Reginald, Vane, and I, who had free and constant access to the sanctum—a privilege which our own habits and our knowledge of hers, prevented our ever abusing. Not unfrequently, however, she used to ask me to go there, to consult with her on some little point of daily interest, to read, or to sing with her: often I read aloud while she worked, and this was what generally best pleased her.

The arrival of some new books was the signal for the commencement of a sort of series of these "morning entertainments," which were occasionally shared by Vane and Reginald.

One day, I was reading from a volume of poems which had just appeared from the pen of a new and unknown writer. Selina was, in general, the most attentive of auditors, but on this occasion, I, happening to raise my eyes from the book—and turning them on her, perceived she was sitting, her hands on her lap, buried in a profound reverie, and evidently unconscious of anything beyond the subject of her own thoughts. I finished the passage, and then, somewhat mischievously, asked her opinion on it; she started, "I beg your pardon, dear child," she said, with her own frank smile, "but—forgive me—I was thinking of something else;" she paused, then dropping her eyes, she added in a lower tone, while the eloquent blood rose to her very temples—"if you knew of what I was thinking you would not wonder at my inattention." I went and sat down on the sofa by her side, and put my arm round her waist, "Tell me, Selina, of what you were thinking; may I not know?" She raised the lid of a work-basket that stood beside her, and took out—a tiny cap—worked and laced, and frilled, and with blushing, bashful triumph, held it up on the tips of her fingers:

"Darling!" I exclaimed, "how glad I am!—are you very happy?"

"Oh, so happy! so proud! I have wished for this so long—at least, it seemed long; I have dreamt of it, and felt jealous of every young mother; and Reginald wished it as much as I; and—it was foolish, unjust, absurd, I know, but I could not help it—sometimes I fancied—no, I won't speak such fancies!—he is now as proud and happy as I am. Oh, Evelyn, at times I think I have too much felicity."

"Dearest, this very fear ought to help to reassure you: you are so intensely conscious of and grateful for the happiness God sends you; you do not accept it as a right—you esteem it so entirely as a gratuity, make so good a use of it, are so anxious to communicate whatever portion of it you can, to others, that I know no one who need feel fewer misgivings on the subject."

"You think so—I will try to hope it. Oh, indeed, indeed I am grateful for such happiness! there is not a morning or a night of my life that I do not thank God for it from my inmost soul, and pray that I may not be spoiled by it, and rendered unfit to bear adversity, if He thought fit ever to send it to me. I pray, only, that it may not be sent through those I love; *that* I fear I am too weak to bear!"

"Let us talk," said I, "of my second cousin, in whom I am doubly interested, having a claim on both your and Reginald's side."

"Yes, and godmother too, of course; and namesake. You really are the most convenient friend in the world," she went on, with her silvery laugh; "for you are ready to fill up every office that friendship can impose. You'll have no sinecure, my poor Evie! here comes somebody!" and the cap was hurried, with every appearance of guilty haste, into the work-basket, as Vane knocked at the door.

"What have you two been conspiring about?" he asked, as his quick eye noted a certain embarrassment on both our faces; "Selina looks the most guilty: come Eve, turn State's evidence, and save your country and your kindred from her machinations; I'm sure it must be something atrocious; I never saw such a diabolical countenance in my life. I have been a great fool to allow you to associate with her; I will do so no longer; come away, instantly, before the work of corruption is further advanced." And drawing my arm through his, he led me out of the room—turning back at the door to shake his head, tragically, at Selina, whom we left bathed in blushes.

A happy month flew by at Woodlands, which brought us into midsummer, and then it was settled that we should accompany our guests home.

At daybreak on one morning, I was called to Selina's room: by the bed sat Reginald, haggard with emotion, his elbows on his knees, his head resting on his hands. "Evelyn, dear," said Selina, "take Reginald with you; keep him till—till you are sent for." I kissed her brow; and silently laying my hand on Reginald's shoulder, he rose and followed me passively as a child. I led him to the drawing-room, and there he flung himself on a sofa, and burying his face among the pillows, sobbed till every nerve of his manly frame shook like the weakest of woman's.

I knew how vain it was to speak to him then, and I let the paroxysm pass: he became calmer, and—though my own heart beat nervously, though my ear was set to catch every sound, and I could hardly command the tremor of my voice, I strove to appear confident and at ease, and talked to him of Selina and of his child with every appearance of assurance and security. A hurried step on the stairs! we both sprang forward to the door to hear the blessed announcement that all was well, and that Selina was the mother of a noble boy! "*Now* I may go to her!" Reginald exclaimed, turning to me: "Not yet;" he returned to the sofa, and sat down. "Evelyn," he said, his face an April sky of tears and sunshine, "help me to thank God for all this." We knelt down, side by side; a prayer, repeated in firm accent, seemed to rise from the very inmost recesses of my soul; while Reginald, with bowed head and crossed hands, now and then uttered a deep "Amen!" As we rose from our knees, Vane, who had more faith in my management of Reginald than in his own, entered.

"Now," I said, "if Reginald will keep quiet, I will go and see if he may greet his son and heir." He promised, and I proceeded to Selina's chamber; ere I reached it, the shrill cry that struck upon my ear made my heart leap with a strange emotion: who has not felt this, at that first actual evidence of the existence of a new human creature, the sudden presence of another mortal, as yet strange and unknown even to the expectant and adoring hearts of the authors of its being? what must *she* have felt, when that cry first told her she was the mother of a living child! Oh, I almost envied her!

Selina was much excited when I entered; tears and smiles passed in succession over her face; she would talk rapidly, calling her child by names of the most impassioned tenderness; and it was only on my assuring her that I would not let her husband come till she was calm and silent, that she strove to regain tranquillity. Then I sought Reginald, and, leaving him by her bedside, turned to contemplate more at leisure the little heir, who had ceased to exert his lungs, and lay, displaying only a little red face and hands in the midst of much muslin and flannel, on the nurse's knee. Of course she assured me it was one of the finest specimens of new-born humanity that had ever come under her wide-spread experience; and I really believe it might have been; though mine not being at that period at all extensive, I was content to take her word for it, and to gaze at the little, soft, half-formed, soulless face, with working mouth and half-closed eyes, wondering the while what might be its sensations, and if, as yet, a dawn of anything beyond the consciousness of mere physical existence had gleamed on its spirit.

While thus speculating, the father came to look at his son; "There's a lovely boy, sir!" exclaimed the nurse, as he bent over it.

Reginald seemed reassured by the assertion; it did not appear quite to have struck him in that light before.

"You think it's a fine child, nurse?" he asked, half doubtfully, half hopefully; "isn't it very red?" he suggested, timidly.

"Red, sir! of course it is; all healthy children are red at first: I should think it *was* red! a love, a beauty, it was!"

"May I kiss it?"

"Kiss it! Lord love you, yes, sir—no danger!"

Reginald performed the operation with evidently as much alarm as pleasure, and then stood contemplating the infant with a mixture of pride and wonder that was at once touching and ludicrous beyond expression. Then, evidently without having at all made clear his own impressions on the subject of his son's aspect, he returned to the bedside, and sat silently holding his wife's hand in his own.

Selina had resolved from the first to nurse the child herself, a duty to which, as she was remarkably healthy, neither her physician nor Reginald objected. The child was brought to her, and I noted the difference of the earliest impressions of father and mother. She never for a moment doubted of the perfection of the little being; I believe *she* thought its redness constituted one of its chief charms; she hugged it, without the least alarm that it would crumble to pieces in her grasp; she kissed, and smiled, and wept over it, studying its features, its hair, its little helpless, half-open hands; seeking to find it like Reginald; and then looking forth from the present into a vista leading through short-coats, the first utterance of "Papa," the first tottering steps, the rocking-horse, the pony, school-days, at which she winced a little, but consoled herself with an assurance of prizes and distinctions; college, with increasing honors, and then a manhood like its father's. Whether, during that first day of maternity, she arrived at being a grandmother, I cannot positively state, but I think it highly probable that that prospect was at least glanced at in her speculations, as after her first excitement over, she lay, calm and happy, a half-smile on her sweet lips, and her large brown eyes, now wandering about the room, now fixed in deep abstraction.

Selina's recovery was rapid, and day by day her adoration for her child seemed to increase. As its beauty began to develop, Reginald's paternal pride and affection grew proportionately, and he ceased to regard his son as a strange and dangerous piece of mechanism, which he did not comprehend, and feared to injure by a touch.

In due time, there was a grand christening; and then we left our little godson, and returned home.

The winter passed by, quietly and uneventfully, and the spring brought the period for our second visit to the Audleys.

As we drove up the avenue, which led to their pleasant country-house, the sound of our wheels brought out its beloved inhabitants to greet us; there on the steps stood Selina, looking, as I fancied, a shade less girlish, a little more matronly, than last year, but ever bright and beautiful as the morning; and Reginald with his boy in his arms. *There* indeed was a metamorphosis; instead of the helpless bundle in long clothes, was a noble, sturdy, infant Hercules, with such limbs, such a complexion, such glorious eyes—his mother's—such clustering golden curls. As I advanced to kiss him, he looked at me intently for a moment, clinging tight to his father; then relenting, his face relaxed, and he offered his lips to my embrace, but decidedly declined exchanging Reginald's protection for mine. Vane approached; *veni, vidi, vici!* the boy laughed outright, stretched out his fat arms, and nestled in his bosom. Was it a thrill of triumph or a pang of jealousy that shot through my heart at the sight? Alas! it was the latter; not jealousy at the child's preference—*that* could only delight me, as a fresh proof of Vane's wonderful power of attraction—but another jealousy, hitherto unfelt, the yearning of the childless Rachel at the sight of her sister's maternity; the pain that it was no child of mine that thus clung to my husband, as to its natural protector. Alas! for the incompleteness of human felicity! this discontent dashed with bitterness the happiness I expected from this meeting, and as the child received and returned Vane's embraces, each caress struck a new pang to my jealous heart.

"But you don't seem so struck with the change in Evie as I had quite made up my mind you would be!" exclaimed Selina, after the first greetings and inquiries were over. "I thought you would be astonished at his growth and improvement; come here, Evie, and show yourself to your godmother;" and she tried to take him from Vane, who had taken the boy from his father's arms; but he only clasped him the tighter, and hid his face in his neck. Selina's color rose a little.

"Upon my word, you are a nice boy! Refuse to come to your mother from anybody, be it even Vane, at the end of a quarter of an hour's acquaintance!"

Reginald laughed and rubbed his hands; Selina stole a momentary glance at him, and sat down by me, silent and mortified.

I saw this would not do, and I broke the pause by expressing, as I honestly could do, my admiration of the child's singular vigor and beauty; as she listened to my praises, the young mother's face lighted again.

"Yes! is he not lovely? And so good, so tractable, such a fine nature! hasn't he, Reginald?"

"Well, I suppose his nature is much like that of other children: when he is in a good humor, he plays and laughs, and when he is in a rage, he kicks and screams: don't you, old boy—lustily?" and he took him from Vane's arms, a proceeding which induced the child instantly to justify the latter assertion in the most unmistakable manner.

"Dear, Reginald! how can you be so rough with the child! He never cries with me, because I am always gentle with him. Evie, Evie, my darling—come to Mamma—there, there!" and she walked up and down the room, hushing the infant on her bosom.

"Selina, do send him up to the nursery—Evelyn and Vane have had quite enough of this!—here—Thomas—send nurse to take the child, and tell her to make haste."

And Reginald's eye followed Selina, as she continued to soothe the still weeping baby, with a glance of discontent I had never before seen it wear. Did not this rebuke put to silence my jealous longings? The thought that the attainment of their highest hopes had brought a little cloud — however partial, however fleeting it might prove—between those two hearts, hitherto so united? No; we always deem that we should regulate our gifts and our happiness better than those we see before us do, and that, by our own superior management of them, we should contrive to reap all the wheat and leave the tares behind.

Nurse Morris came and carried off Evie to his proper domain, and then Selina accompanied me to my room.

Her sweet temper could never long bear the impression of any annoyance or source of displeasure, and ere we got to the top of the stairs, she was all smiles and joy again. She had so much to tell me—so many plans to recount for the disposal of our time during our stay at Audley Court; and Reginald, had, it seemed, been so actively and pleasantly occupied in a similar manner with Vane, during our absence, that all traces of the little cloud lately looming in the conjugal horizon had completely vanished, and all was again smiles and sunshine.

Dinner passed away with the most cordial gaiety. Contrary to their usual custom, Vane and Reginald stayed in the dining-room when we left it, an arrangement which evidently pleased Selina; and was, I guessed, not without a motive on her husband's part, for as soon as we quitted the room, she said—"Come, Evelyn, let us run up and put baby to bed while they are there."

I accompanied her, and we superintended the bath, and putting to bed of the beautiful boy; but when the operation was concluded, and Selina was about, most unwillingly, I must say, to bid him a temporary adieu, he clung to his mother, refusing absolutely to accept the ministry of nurse Morris to invoke slumber.

"Evelyn, dear, will you go down, and say I'll come presently; you see he wont go to sleep without me."

I went, and found Vane and Reginald in the drawing-room.

"Where's Selina?" the latter inquired. I gave her message; he made no reply, but it was some moments before he resumed the topic on which he had been conversing when I entered.

It was more than half an hour before Selina came down stairs: and even then, it was only on a summons to the effect that tea was waiting, that she made her appearance. As she took her place at the table, she, in passing Reginald, paused, and laid her hand on his shoulder: he took no notice of the movement; she withdrew the hand, went on to her place, and sat down in silence. This time the cloud passed not away, but hung over the whole evening; not gloomy and lowering—to strangers it would have been hardly perceptible—but to Vane and me, who loved them so, very evident and very painful.

At night Selina accompanied me to my room; she tried to converse gaily as usual, but there was a visible weight on her spirits, and, sooner than usual, she bade me good night and retired.

We had been from home about a week, when Reginald proposed that we should, on the following day, drive to a cave about ten or twelve miles off, and pic nic there. The plan was at once accepted, and orders were given to make the necessary preparations for starting at two o'clock.

The morning rose brilliant and beautiful, the sun breaking through the mist, and making the dew-drops glitter like diamonds one very leaf and blade of grass. Hundreds of butterflies were abroad; the swallows flew high up in mid-air; the scarlet pimpernel—the shepherd's weather-glass that rarely predicts falsely—spread out all its coral petals wide to the sun; and everything promised a glorious day.

We met at breakfast in the best of spirits, and talked over the pleasure we anticipated—all but Selina, who, though she joined in it at times, did not seem to enter into the thing with her usual childlike gaiety and cordiality. After breakfast she asked me to accompany her to the nursery, which I did.

"Does it strike you that Evie does not look quite so well as usual?" she inquired.

It certainly did not strike me, and I said so.

"Oh, madam!" exclaimed nurse; "indeed you are making yourself uneasy about nothing at all; I assure you, the child never was better in his life; he slept well, ate a most hearty breakfast, and has no sign of anything being the matter with him."

"Indeed, nurse, he started several times in his sleep, and I'm quite sure he looks flushed: feel his cheek—it's quite hot!"

"Law, madam! so is every child's when it wakes up out of its cot, especially in summer."

Selina looked uneasy and unconvinced.

"I wish we were not going out to-day!" she said, reflectively.

For myself, I would willingly have given up the party to save her one moment's care, however groundless her alarm might be; but the proposition of going was Reginald's, and I had already seen enough to feel convinced that any attempt to put off the excursion on this ground, where really no cause could properly be said to exist, would be to him a source of serious annoyance; for the child was weaned, and could perfectly dispense with his mother's presence for many hours. Not knowing, therefore, how to conciliate matters, I remained silent, and the subject dropped.

At one o'clock Selina came to me:—"Dearest Evelyn!" she began, in her most caressing tone—"would you mind going without me? I really feel so uneasy about Evie: it may be fancy—nurse says it is—but still I don't think he is quite himself."

"I will do as you like, dear child; but indeed I think you ought to go, on Reginald's account; I can't fancy there is anything the matter with the child, and I'm sure *he* will be greatly disappointed."

"Oh, he won't mind—much; he'll have you and Vane; and if I went, I should be thinking of baby all the time, and fancying all sorts of horrors about him."

I shook my head.

"Vane and I are not you, Selina; no one can supply your place to Reginald."

She stood irresolute, and at this moment her husband's voice was heard calling her.

"Come with me, Evelyn!" she exclaimed hastily, "and help me;" and seizing my gown, she went out before I could resist her.

"Selina!—Evelyn!—Ah, here you are, both of you—that's right! I only wanted to remind you of the hour, and ask you to be punctual."

"Reginald," Selina began, and hesitated.

"Well, child, what is it? Have you some terrible confession to make, that you look so embarrassed?" and he smiled down on her. "Come, make a clean breast of it!"

She went up and stood close to him, not venturing to raise her eyes to his face while she spoke, but appearing intent on the button of his coat, which she was twisting between her fingers.

"Reginald, I don't think baby is quite well."

"Since when? I saw him a quarter of an hour ago in the garden, in a state of health and spirits that rendered the task of carrying him no light one."

"Yes, but—" and the button ran some risk of parting company with the coat.

"But what? You are a little goose, filling your head with such absurd fancies! There, go and see about getting on your things; it will soon be time to start."

Still she did not move.

"You wouldn't mind very much, Reginald, if I did not go?"

A flush rose to his cheek, but he controlled the emotion that brought it.

"Nonsense—not go? We'll take the child with us, there, will that satisfy you? Tell nurse to get him and herself ready."

"But, dearest, if he has fever—which I can't help fancying he has—think what it would be to bring him home through the evening air! No, let me stay at home with him. Evelyn and Vane will go with you, and we'll all go together another day. There, it's settled;" and she released the button.

Reginald caught her hand: "Is it settled? You will not go?"

"No—there's a dear boy, don't ask me!"

"I will not." He dropped the hand.

"Evelyn, I may count upon you?"

Selina nodded and frowned to me.

"Yes," I said; "I will go and put on my bonnet."

"That's right." He turned and went down stairs.

"I'm afraid he's vexed with me," Selina said; "but I'll soon bring him round. Really, you know, if baby *should* be ill, I could never forgive myself for leaving him."

"Dear child, I am very sorry for this. I am sure your husband is very greatly pained by your resistance; think of it; it is not too late now—tell him you will go—do!"

"No, no—I can't go, really. Oh, you'll see he won't mind it after a little while. There's the carriage," and the footman coming to announce that the gentlemen were waiting, we descended to the hall. Selina advanced somewhat timidly to bid her husband farewell; he hastily and silently touched her forehead with his lips, and without looking at her again, helped me into the carriage, and we drove off.

For some minutes we drove on in silence, feeling how any attempt to enter on common topics must jar on

Reginald's feelings, yet not daring to touch on so tender a one as that under which he was smarting.

I felt for him acutely, and yet I so loved Selina, I knew so well her worth, that it went to my heart to accuse her.

It is not always our faults, properly speaking, that entail pain and suffering on those we love, and on ourselves. How frequently does a mistaken view of duty, seized and acted upon without due consideration, regarded only in a one-sided light, lead to the most disastrous consequences! Dear Selina! I saw the rock she was splitting upon, and my heart ached when I thought of the possible results of her error. Ah, woman! it is a hard thing to keep a man's heart?—guard it tenderly and reverently when it is indeed all your own; if it be a heart worth keeping if you handle it lightly and carelessly, it may slip through your fingers; and be sure, that once *really* lost, there is no return; when the stages of pain and anger and suffering have been gone through, indifference succeeds; and then not whole oceans of tears, not a hundred noons of smiles, not a life of concessions will repair the loss that one tear, one smile, one concession in season, might have prevented.

The day was, as it had promised to be, beautiful; the drive lovely; the site to which we were bound, picturesque beyond description:—but the one element, peace of mind, was wanting, and this clouded the sunshine, and darkened the landscape. Vane had taken his sketching materials, and the interest these afforded, in some degree relieved the embarrassment of the moment.

"I wish," said Vane, "you two would not sit there and watch me, but go and wander about a little, and then come back and see what progress I have made, and give me the benefit of fresh eyes."

I understood his meaning; I thought it might be well to afford Reginald the opportunity, if he felt so disposed, to relieve himself by opening his heart to me, whom he ever regarded as a sister; and I hoped, if he did so, that I might be able to urge somewhat in Selina's defence that could take from the irritation of the wound.

For some moments we walked in almost unbroken silence; at last he stopped short.

"Evelyn, is not this very hard to bear!"

"Dear Reginald!—it is a little; but—forgive me, and listen to me; the depth and intensity of your feelings, and of your affection for Selina, make you perhaps a little unjust;—consider that it is the excess of one of a woman's highest virtues—maternal solicitude—that has caused her to act thus. Look at the thousands of women whose temptations are far less, yet whose sin is the want of that very virtue—whose children, instead of being to them sources of tender anxiety, are looked upon rather as causes of trouble and expense, or are, at least, neglected, and left to the care of servants and inferiors, so that they may not be permitted to interfere with the vanity and pleasures of the mother?"

"Yes, Evelyn, all that is very well; Selina's love for her, for our child, would and ought to be the last feeling I could combat: but oh! think of what she was to me before!—think of how entirely we were united in heart, in tastes, in everything!—how we were always together; how my wishes, my feelings, were ever her first, almost her sole thought. And oh, Evelyn! think how I loved—how I love her!—from the first day I ever beheld her, I lived but for her. In her affection, in her society, I found all that was wanting to secure my happiness: if she had a wish, my greatest joy was to guess and anticipate it; if a moment of pain or care, I would have given my life could that have relieved her. Ah, Evelyn! I believe it is in the nature of very few men to love as I love her; I thought when our child was born, it would be the greatest and strongest tie of tenderness and sympathy of all that could exist between us: I fancied that the mutual cares we should have to bestow on this little helpless creature, that united in itself our two existences, would, if it were possible, bind us yet more indissolubly. This I dreamed; and what do I find to be the reality?—that this child has supplanted me!—that the heart I deemed so deep, can not contain us both; that it is he that reigns there, and that I—I to whom she is all on earth, become a mere secondary object, to be thought of and attended to, perhaps, when he no longer needs her thoughts or her attention; that my most earnest wishes are to be set aside before a baby's whim; that I am no more to have a companion—one ever at my side, ever interested in all that interests me, as she used to be. I tried to dispense with much of her society; to pass many hours alone I used to spend at her side; to make solitary excursions where I had made such happy ones with her, deeming she would understand the sacrifice, regret its necessity, and when that no longer existed, repay me for all; good heavens! how bitterly have I been deceived."

And Reginald's lip quivered, and the tears started to his eyes; he dashed them proudly away.

"What matters it to me that you tell me it is my own child that has wrought the change? the change exists: is not that enough to constitute my misery? enough or not enough, it *does;* and it matters little whether the cause of my suffering be or be not sufficient—the suffering *is*, and must be unless this state of things alters—this bitter estrangement between us ceases."

"It will cease, Reginald; trust my words. Selina's heart is as much your own as the day you married her: this is a passing cloud, at the recollection of which you will smile a little time hence; don't shake your head! Oh, I know Selina so well! all her depth of heart—all her love for you! Forgive me, dear Reginald, but I think you have been too sensitive in this matter: if, at the first, you had hinted to Selina but a shade of what you have just told me."

"If she loved me as I loved her, she would have guessed it!—besides, I have shown her a thousand times how her evident preference for the child pained me!"

"But how, Reginald?—by resentment, by opposition almost systematic: ah, what mistakes people commit by making their jealousies and their displeasures the interpreters of their affections. My poor Reginald!

with your great heart and your clear head, you have fallen into this common error! but you will remedy it; you will both come to a perfect understanding of this little difference, and then how you will laugh to think who you have made your rival!"

"Dear Evelyn! may you prove a true prophet; but I fear more than I hope."

I saw the tide was turned, and I felt it was better to say no more, but to leave him under the influence of this impression. "Come, Reginald, Vane will think we have lost ourselves, and the sketch must need our criticism by this time."

And turning, we retraced our steps to the spot where we had left my husband.

During the rest of the day there was an evident change in Reginald's demeanor; he was now more thoughtful than gloomy; once or twice I alluded to Selina, kindly and naturally, and I could see that hope and conciliation had taken the place of jealousy and bitterness.

We returned home just as the summer evening was merging into night: in the hall, Selina met us—without the child; she smiled on Reginald with half-timid, half-beseeching eyes; he passed his arm round her waist and gently kissed her.

"How is Evie, darling?" he asked.

"Quite well. I was very foolish, I believe, to be so easily frightened; I won't be such a little goose again—will you forgive me?"

That night I told Selina what had passed between her husband and myself. She was deeply and powerfully affected.

"Ah, Evelyn! what a risk I have run! My poor darling Reginald! Oh! yes, you told him truly—that I loved him now as I ever loved him—better, better at this moment than in all my life—better than all on earth—than Evie, than anything! Thank you; may God bless you, as I do! ever wise, ever kind, ever right!" And with tears glittering in her eyes, she again kissed me; and as we parted, I had the joyous conviction of having restored perfect peace and confidence between those two hearts.

A NIGHT AMONG THE LIONS.

You say, dear Ned, that I promised to send you an account of any adventures I should meet with, and that I have been more than three months in Africa, and have not yet sent you a single line. I plead guilty to the accusation, but can only say in mitigation of punishment, that until the other day I met with no adventure worth recording—plenty that to a person utterly unacquainted with the daily routine of African travelling would be interesting enough, but which to you, who are pretty well versed in books of African adventure, from Latrobe to Harris, would present no feature whatever of real interest. However, at last I have actually been involved in an adventure, and so am entitled to redeem my pledge.

We started for the interior from Port Natal about five weeks ago—a pretty strong party; for, besides the five whom, like myself, love of sport and adventure had brought together, we found a—now what he really is I have never been able, for the life of me, to find out, though we have been nearly six weeks together—he isn't an officer, naval or military; he isn't an engineer; he isn't an envoy; he isn't a missionary; but he's a little of all these rolled into one, and is on a roving errand among the outlying settlements and the native tribes—ugly brutes!—and what is more to our purpose, has a lot of Hottentot nigger rascals about him, by way of interpreters, and servants, and body-guard, etc., who are of immense use in bargaining with and bullying native trackers, guides, huntsmen, and so on. Our place has been hitherto to make for "points," or spots where Mr. Commissioner has business to transact; and making a sort of head-quarters of these, to sally forth every day into the surrounding country in search of what sport may fall in our way. And I can tell you splendid sport it is, if you are well mounted; but you may guess that the climate, and the travelling, and the ground, soon beat any but a real good horse. I am fortunate in having with me both the little wiry Arabs I bought at Meerut to hunt boars with, and which for bottom beat anything I ever crossed—indeed, if I were to give you an account of one or two of the runs I have had this last week or two on one or other of them, you would—but bah! you're an old boar hunter, and know well what stuff there is in these queer, little, hollow-backed children of the desert.

I must, first of all, give you some notion of our cavalcade—and a pretty imposing one, I can tell you, it is. First, for ourselves, we have a couple of wagons, which S——, who is second lieutenant of the *Leander*, has christened the "Frigate" and the "Bumboat." The Frigate, which is the lighter of the two, we have fitted up as a living-place, and it serves us "for kitchen, for parlor, and hall;" the other, as its name implies, is stored with the contents of a grocer's, oilman's, cheesemonger's, ironmonger's, and I know not how many other tradesmen's shops; it's a sort of peripatetic bazaar, where you can get everything, from a tent to a gherkin, or from a Minié ball to a bead; the latter article, with buttons and brass wire, etc., being exceedingly useful in bartering with the natives.

Four "span" of draft oxen are employed, a span (twelve) at a time (except in difficulties, as going up a mountain at an angle of 45 deg.) in drawing these wagons; then we have two horses a man (some three), a half dozen of regular servants, and a herd of greasy, half-naked, ugly beggars of every shade of dirty black, whom I have long discovered to be remarkable chiefly for lying, thieving, and drinking raw spirits (when they can get it); but whose astounding activity and intelligence after game, is only equalled by their powers of gormandizing on it when killed.

The Commissioner, being but "one inside," has condensed his frigate and bumboat into one light wagon, which we call "The State Coach;" but then he has two other ponderous affairs, stocked with red and blue cloth, double-barrelled guns, cocked hats, buttons, powder, rum, glass beads, and no one knows what besides, the destination of which may be easily guessed from the names which were found conspicuously fastened on the wagon-tilts the second morning of our journey, and supposed to be the handiwork of the aforesaid lieutenant —"Bribery" and "Corruption."

Mr. Commissioner's body-guard seems to have been selected on the same principle which prompts country gentlemen to make poachers into gamekeepers. A more villainous-looking set of wretches I don't think I ever had the misfortune to meet with—and it appears it is necessary not only to postpone any payment of their exorbitant wages until their return to the colony, but to make that payment entirely dependent on their bringing back the envoy undamaged and well content. In addition to this precaution there is a "material guarantee," in the shape of a very powerful white—a Dutchman by descent—the possessor of a most unmistakably no-nonsense sort of eye, a double-barrelled gun of portentous bore, a revolver, of which the natives have a peculiar dread, and which Klopf keeps in his belt day and night, and, lastly, the most terrific instrument, in the shape of a hippopotamus-hide whip, I ever saw.

So you may judge that we make a tolerably imposing show, trailing over an arid, burning plain, or winding up the sides of some steep mountain, or along the dry bed of a mountain torrent, whose waters must, during the rainy season, be addicted to painfully irregular courses.

But the sport. Oh! son of my uncle! the sport. Read the following contents of our game-bag, which you will say ought to be Gargantua's:

Elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotami, giraffes, elands, antelopes (no end), buffaloes, gnus, zebras, lions, panthers, &c., &c., &c., to say nothing of those beastly hyenas, the very mention of which makes my blood creep.

I give the palm, on the whole, to elephant-hunting. These in Africa are so much more ferocious—at least the big bull-elephants—and so much more active than any I saw in Ceylon or India.

As to the lions, they swarm—literally swarm; we meet them by night and day—in the bush and in the open—by the water and on the dry plain. Everywhere, and at every turn, lions—lions. They stare at us gravely, and then gallop heavily off, very seldom charging. But the "individual," as naturalists call him, of whom I am about to tell you, was amongst those who did charge, as you shall hear.

I think I never heard or saw so many in the course of some ten hours as surrounded us all one night when we had hunted too far from the wagons to admit of our returning, and had to "camp out" the best way we could. We selected a pleasant green spot in the centre of a valley, close to a sort of large pool, formed by the natural damning of a noisy little river, and surrounded on three sides by a cover of mimosa-trees, karree-trees, long grass, and brush and underwood, of which we cut huge heaps and made corresponding huge fires; and yet, notwithstanding, we were actually "among lions" the whole night. To begin, we had almost to roke them out to form our camping-ground. One venerable lioness, in particular, backed by a couple of fast young lions ("Young Africa," I suppose), disputing every inch of ground with obstinate stoutness, and not giving way at last until two or three shots had been dropped into her. Next, in the very middle of supper, as we sat round a huge watch-fire, its red glare suddenly fell on the stalwart shape of a fine male lion, who had stepped out of the bushes, as it appeared, to inspect the progress of our cookery, and who sniffed up the savory fumes of some antelope steaks with the most evident satisfaction. We could not get rid of him either without a few shots, which we were sorry for, as he was a fine fellow, and doing no harm. But when we rolled ourselves up in our blankets—if we had been provident enough to bring them, or in whatever we could lay our hands on if we had not, the bustle and the din were enough to have frightened sleep from any lids but those of utterly tired hunters. The bushes seemed alive with them, the horses tethered in a ring outside us, every now and then set to work to brew a commotion of a furious kind, as they caught sight or smell of one who ventured nearer than the rest. Every now and then a loud cry, a plunge, and a struggle at the pool, denoted where some unhappy antelope, who had ventured down in the dark to get a drink, had been summarily snapped up.

I was anxious about my little Arab, and scarcely slept at all, lying under his belly when I did; and it was well I so managed, for as I dozed off towards morning, the intelligent little rascal gave me a sharp nip in the shoulder, and, by a plaintive whining directed my attention to a young gentleman lion, who (our sentry having fallen asleep from sheer fatigue) was quietly creeping up within charging distance, doubtless to make a meal of my poor Mulek. I did not like to rouse the rest, and so jumped up, and, seizing my rifle (for fear of accidents), strode boldly towards him, when he bundled off with a lumbering gallop, evidently much disgusted.

At last day dawned—the roarings subsided—the sleepers yawned, stretched themselves, and began to get up—the fire was renewed, some fresh steaks cut, and everything betokened the approach of breakfast.

Whilst breakfast was preparing, I proceeded to take a saunter down to the pool, not without some faint hopes of a bath, though I feared our horses, to say nothing of the other animals who had visited it during the night, might have mudded it too much for that. However, I resolved to try, and throwing my Minié into the hollow of my arm, lounged down a path among the bushes, now well beaten by the feet of men and horses. The latter I found up to their bellies in the pool, enjoying themselves as completely as the flies would let them; but as the water looked uncommonly turbid, I thought I would skirt along a little to the left and look for a cleaner spot; and so, climbing a short steep, covered with long grass and underwood, I pushed aside some branches which intervened between me and a small clear space of shorter turf and—to my very intense astonishment, though I must say not at that moment to my dismay, I was so used to the sight of them—found myself within a few yards of one of the finest male lions I ever saw, and who was engaged with a look of grave patriarchal interest in watching the movements of the horses below—doubtless selecting one for his breakfast. For a few seconds, I remained really lost in admiration of the grand beauty of the "tableau" he presented.

It was, however, necessary to decide on some line of action immediately. I could not help hitting him if I chose to fire, but if I did not kill him outright at one shot, he was so close to me that I could hardly hope to escape without an ugly brush. Surely this was a case in which discretion would be the better part of valor; and, as he was so absorbed in the contemplation of the horses below, that he had not yet noticed me, I decided to steal off as I came. Ah! that dry twig that *would* place itself in the way of my very first retrograde footstep. The sharp crackle effected what the more subdued noise of my previous movements had not done, and with a short startled growl, the beast swung himself round, and in a second was staring at me with a look which said, "Hullo! who are you?" as plainly as look could speak. Instinctively I threw my rifle forward, cocking it at the same moment, and some seconds of perfect immovableness on each side ensued, during which I was trying to make out whether he would charge or not. The study of physiognomy is doubtless pleasant enough on the whole; but when your subject is a big male lion, and the question depending on the study, whether you shall be summarily "smashed" or let alone, why, I confess it becomes (as Mr. Weller says) too exciting to be pleasant.

How I studied every feature, trying to detect a change of some sort that might give me a clue. It came at last: he gradually lowered his head, and by the "wagging" motion of his hind-quarters, which I could just spy over his shoulder, I saw he was gathering his hind-legs under him—a sure indication. What odd things come into people's minds in moments of peril. That movement brought to my recollection most vividly a bitterly parallel scene in my aunt's garden at Harrow, where I watched her cat gathering herself up in an exactly similar way, to pounce on a wretched sparrow.

The next moment, he dashed at me with a hoarse snarl, which sounded as though a giant had drawn the bow suddenly across the strings of a stupendous violoncello. I fired as he rushed in, aiming as well as I could at the middle of his forehead. As I did so, I was swept down with force of an express train, and for a few seconds lost all consciousness.

The first thing I was sensible of, as soon as I began to get my senses together, was the clear, strong voice of N——, calling to me in the most placid, though earnest manner—

"Lie perfectly still, Walter; it's your only chance."

How my heart leaped at the voice! Help was at hand, but the very words that announced it, at the same time pointed out my extreme danger; it needed only the most moderate exercise of my returning faculties to understand why.

I was lying on my face among the long grass at the top of the little steep I have mentioned, and could see nothing, but I could *feel* the lion close to me. I could hear his deep, short, angry breath, like *staccato* purrs of an enormous cat—could detect a smacking noise, which I afterwards found arose from his licking at a stream of blood which flowed down the side of his nose, from a deep score on his forehead given him by my ball—nay, I could feel his huge tail, as he rolled it angrily across from side to side, rest for a moment on my back every now and then.

The bitter anguish of those few years of moments—well, you can guess all that. Presently I heard the crack of a rifle on my left, a sharp whistle close to my head, and a "thud" on my right, as the shot told among the fur, succeeded by another short, sharp snarl louder than the first—another crack, a sensation like a red-hot wire across my neck (being at the bottom of the slope they could but just sight the lion over my head; and N—— had fired a quarter of an inch too low), another furious snarl, and then a roar—such a roar—within a yard of my tympanum—I never heard such a sound out of any other thing, living or dead; then three or four more shots close together, and a bustle at my side which sounded like my neighbor settling down among the grass and bushes.

"Now roll! roll for your life!" shouted N——'s clear voice again. I was saved the trouble—the dying brute, in his convulsions, giving me a kick with his hind legs, which sent me flying down the steep out of the reach of all further danger.

* * * *

"Do you feel better now, old fellow? It's all over, you are not much hurt, only keep quiet," and such exclamations, were what I was next conscious of. I don't think I am a coward; some of my friends, yourself among the number, accuse me of over-daring sometimes; but I am not ashamed to admit that the horror of those few moment alongside the lion was too much for me—and that I had fainted.

It appeared that N—— had been taking an early morning stroll round the camping ground, even before I started, in order to ascertain, before we sat down to our morning meal, whether our troublesome and noisy neighbors of the preceding night had decamped or not; and being a careless fellow, had gone unarmed—had

Nothing at all in his hand but his fist—

and had also lighted on, or rather sighted, the very identical royal brute who had been so near demolishing me; and N——, thinking it would be a good deed at once to rid our neighborhood of the dangerous intruder, and at the same time secure the handsomest trophy we had yet reaped in the shape of a lion's skin, had returned straightway for his rifle and his friends, who were all on their road to the spot in a body, when my shot and the simultaneous snarl were heard. They dashed to the spot just in time to see the lion, who had blundered over me and rolled down the steep, gather himself up, and climb up it again, in order to dispose of his unfortunate victim at the top. N——, who was well versed in lion-hunting, knew that as long as I remained perfectly quiet, it would be a very long time before he would maul me; but that if I moved, it was all over with me—hence his seasonable caution.

The shot-wound was not much, and I was all right again speedily; and then we proceeded to have a look at my antagonist, whose enormous skin I shall have the pleasure of showing you some day, I hope. He had five shot-holes in head and chest, besides my own "score" on his forehead. This shot, by bothering him in his charge, had probably saved my life at the outset. But what would have been my fate afterwards, had not my friends poured in such a fire in the nick of time, I shudder to think; and you, I know, will not be surprised when I add, that I am honestly thankful to Providence for so directing events as to bring them there.

THINGS WE TALK ABOUT.

There is one species of cant that has flourished ever since the days of Noah. You will find it in the contemporary literature of every period. It is as old as human nature. Its phrases are fixed and traditional. It consists of a systematic depreciation of To-Day and exaltation of Yesterday; it rails about the wisdom of grandmothers, and delights in showing that folly is the peculiar growth of the present.

Those who do not understand it, and are not aware what an old, time-worn, traditional habit it is, how its favorite phrases and terms have been repeated these thousands of years, how they can find them scattered up and down the pages of social history as far back as they can penetrate, are doubtless inclined to listen to its croakings, and moan over the degeneracy of human nature! Their despondency is unnecessary. They will as certainly be held up to future generations as glorious models for emulation, as now their grandmothers are made social saints for their behoof and benefit.

We have just been turning over the pages of an old periodical published more than fifty years ago in this city, and have discovered some paragraphs illustrative of the above position. Here is an article written by no less a personage than Gov. Livingston, and yet it sounds so marvellously like what we read yesterday, last week, last month (every day of our lives), that we are inclined to charge our writers with the crime of plagiarism as well as that of croaking. Isn't it strange that a matter written for 1800, could be clipped out by the scissors, and to nine-tenths of the people appear just fitted for 1856?

We pick out a few sentences:

"Our grandmothers were not, it is true, so gaily drest as our wives, but of inexpressibly greater utility to their husbands."

Who were the grandmothers of 1800? Could they have been the ladies of furbelows, court-plaster, powder, clouds of lace, hoops, rouge, diamonds, etc., of 1750?

"They saw with a glance of the eye whatever concerned the welfare of the family. This they were studious to promote. In this they placed their renown. They were strangers to dissipation; nor were they seen constantly abroad.

"And not only saved their earnings by their economy, but augmented their treasure by their industry.

"Such grandmothers! what blessings to their families! they enjoyed happiness in their chimney corners, while their deluded grand daughters seek for it in vain amid the tumult of the world!

"No French dancing-masters then for country girls that ought to be at their spinning-wheels."

French dancing-masters fifty years ago! We thought they were a biped fresh to the soil.

"A regular and uniform conduct would seem a torment to our gossips and gadders. They want perpetual dissipation—all out of doors—full of vanity, and loaded with the gew-gaws of London and Paris."

Turning over the pages of this Magazine, we come to a series of paragraphs in the same style, dubbed

MODERN INNOVATIONS.

"Our fathers married for love, and were silly enough to think their wives their comfort.

"Their progeny marry for money, and think the sooner their wives are dead the better."

We have a dozen friends who were young in eighteen hundred, who continually repeat axioms almost word for word like the above, applying them to then and now. They probably read this very Magazine in their youthful days, and never forgetting such admirable truths, have simply shifted their application fifty years or so.

"Our fathers went to a theatrical performance to be pleased; to see play, and to behave respectfully to the audience.

"Their progeny go to the play to displease; to confound the actors, and insult everything that is modest and worthy around them."

Our readers will the better appreciate the above if they will recall the fact that a hundred years ago the bloods and young fops had free access to the stage during a performance, took their seats by the wings in full view of the audience, and chatted and laughed with the actresses in the intervals of the dialogue; that between the actors and them passed a continual interchange of banter, jokes, &c., while the actresses were compelled to listen even in the midst of trying scenes, to coarse and loud expressions of love and admiration.

"Our fathers imagined that going to bed at sunset, and getting up at sunrise, was acting agreeable to the palpable ordinances of nature."

(Palpable ordinances of Nature! Sleep eight hours in summer, sixteen hours in winter; if in the far North, have a twenty minutes' doze at one season, and sleep twenty-two hours at another! Palpable ordinances of nature indeed!)

"Their progeny believe that the day is a bore, and night the only time for enjoyment. They go to bed at sunrise and get up at sunset; they take their breakfast in the evening, dine at midnight, and sup regaled with the music of chanticleer."

If the reader could go back fifty years farther, or indeed, to any period to which he may turn, he still would find the same cant in the same words. It is old, threadbare, rotten—but still deceives, and will deceive the world. It is peculiarly the cant of old age, for old age is retrospective and in looking back upon its youth, finds the enchantment which distance lends to things removed.

—It is stated that her Majesty of England, has sent a physician over to Canada, to ascertain if the climate will be sufficiently favorable to her health, should she determine on a visit to her North American Colonies. Now we take it that the arrival of a real *bonâ fide* sovereign on these shores, where foreign counts and mysterious barons have flourished so bravely, would be an event, on both sides of the line: for, of course, Victoria would not visit Niagara without stepping over and taking a view from our side of the Falls. We hope she doesn't think of coming so far, without giving Uncle Sam a friendly call. A crowned queen, legitimately, undoubtedly with the blood of Henry the Eighth—that horrid old woman-killer—in her veins, and as far beyond him as one has time to count, will be a guest worth entertaining. Then remember the lords, and earls, and dukes, always admirers of American beauty, that will come in her train! Why, the very idea is enough to set Uncle Sam to thinking about his own toilet, and how his girls can be set off to the best advantage!

We hope she'll come, from the bottom of our hearts! Not that we haven't seen her, or that there is anything very wonderful in her appearance—though, at the time of her marriage, sculptors did insist that she was as near the Venus de Medicis, as a live woman ever was known to be. Not that she is in blood and law the sovereign of a great nation, but because she is greater and a better thing—*a true woman.* Wise, without an effort to display her wisdom; modest, in the midst of power—a faithful wife, and a fond, wise mother!

This is why we wish to see Victoria in Yankee Land; for, with our weaknesses regarding royalty, she may render womanliness, modesty, and faithfulness, the fashion; and such virtues are something, even if a caprice excites them. The truth is, Victoria is in every respect a perfect gentlewoman, and that is a character which may be studied with great benefit in our fast age. Depend upon it, however, we shall see no Elizabeth in barbaric splendor, flirting with her statesmen one minute, or cuffing their ears the next; nor will she come like the beautiful Queen of Scots, bewitching men to their ruin. Nor, like Catherine de Medicis, with her hands red with slaughter—but she will come to us *a good woman*, whose example the purest girl in our country may follow, and become the better for it.

Our "strong-minded women" may not find in her a great statesman or jurist, but she knows how to submit to superior wisdom; and, though firm in justice, is never obstinate except when she wishes to be merciful.

Our fashionables will be mistaken, if they expect to meet a royal flirt, ready to exhaust herself in a German cotillion, or join in the indelicacy of a polka; for all these things have long since been excluded from her drawing-rooms—but they will find a faithful wife, and a mother acquainted intimately with her own children, which should count for something in these days of neglected nurseries and easy divorces.

In short, Victoria is thoroughly respectable—a thing that cannot be said of all queens—and we, for one, would give the brightest rose in the vase before us to see a crowned woman on this side the Atlantic, whose heart has never swerved to the seductions of the court she rules, and whom power has never tempted into arrogance—a sovereign who has no adverse party, and a lady who, in this slanderous age, has never had a word of blame cast on her womanliness.

Yes, we would give two roses—moss roses at that—to have Victoria the guest of our own free land. It would be something to greet a woman, to whom power has been a birthright, who has had the great good sense to escape moral and political unpopularity, simply by doing right, remembering her sex, and minding her own business. Victoria belongs to the sex, and if she does come to America, won't we ladiës have a pleasant time, generally.

—Hawthorne, in his "Blithedale Romance," speaks of the modern cottage as "so like a plaything, that it seemed as if real joy or sorrow could have no scope within." A brief sentence, but full of a wonderful deal of truth, and harping aright the feelings of every true and cultivated taste. There is no reality, no earnestness, no breadth or depth of being in these fine ornamentations—these shallow, superficial, meaningless doll-shops; fantastic in shape, fantastic in color, fashioned with pettiness of idea, meagreness of conception, and narrowness of soul. They are flimsy, bright, and pretty—as unreal as French jewelry, as showy and soulless as China figures; they look like castors, and pepper-boxes, and mustard cups, and pretty toilet-bottles; they appear as if the world had gone into play-houses, and given themselves up to play-housekeeping; they look as if thumb and finger might crush them, or a breath blow them down; as if their occupants were lay figures, or Dresden statuary, very much gilded, very gay, and very useless. Whose imagination can conceive of Home, or who can think of a life dawning and unfolding within their shallow, toneless circles? Where are the rich, mellow, full associations of the fireside, where home sorrows and home joys and home existence, with all their rich shadowings and deep experiences and earnest affections so flourish and are nurtured—where are these things in this pinchbeck style of architecture—these veneered households—these plated houses—these flimsy, surface-polished, dead doll-houses? Houses set out as we set out new china—furbished up as we furbish up mantel-ornaments—set in gilt and glare—about as large and meaning as old-fashioned bird-houses (why don't they set them up on poles?)—a plague upon such sham affairs, say we!

Give us a cottage or a house where mellow shadows gather, eloquent of life and being, which opens up to Heaven, which roots down into earth, which stretches out and embraces all feeling, thought, and emotion; full of earnest purpose, and calm strength, and large sympathy, rearing up and sending out into the world strong, deep natures—hearts of oak! It is difficult to think of a home like this, with aims and objects such as these, existing in one of these pinchbeck, pretty affairs that we have been describing. A great many will call this subject insignificant—but we tell them that such things are not only sure indices of character—not only indications of flimsiness and shallowness already existing, but they are the nursery of flimsiness and shallowness to come. They seriously denote the tendency of the public mind—show which way sets the public taste—tells to all who are wise enough to see, that inasmuch as home warps, and moulds, and stamps the heart of the man in a way which no after circumstances can obliterate, homes like these must inculcate pettiness—that strength cannot grow out of them, any more than an oak can grow in a flower-pot.

— It has always seemed to us that satire misses its object when it descends to caricature, or deals in extravagance. It is the fault of most of our authors that their satire loses its effect in generalization; that in its over-colored form no man sees his own foibles, but those of his neighbors. We are an admirer of Charles Dickens. We read his works with great relish. The broad humor of his characters has a richness and raciness unattained by any other humorist. But while we find in his gallery of characters, so much of whimsical absurdity and quaint extravagance, so relishable and enjoyable a repertoire of delicious, laugh-engendering, delightful creatures, that, whether real or not, have a human nature of their own, and a fidelity of their own, and a certain kind of faithfulness of their own—are, measured by the actualities of life, but caricatures—whose foibles are not our foibles, whose weaknesses are not our weaknesses. No one recognizes his own portrait in them. Indeed he is rather apt to go about after reading Dickens with a feeling of immunity from folly. Now, we have a new satirist in the the field—Charles Reade—with whom this is all very different. Mr. Reade's satire always comes home. He aims at and hits the bull's eye. There is no shifting the foibles he exposes upon your neighbor. They are yours. He doesn't generalize; he deals in specialties. He delves down and impales your particular folly—your special and individual weakness—and you know it. You may shift and turn, but he holds before you your own deformity, ugly as it may be, and you must look—and as the first step towards the reform of a folly is to see it—you are half-way a convert, even while writhing under the barb that stings you. We have said elsewhere how much we like Charles Reade's new novel. If less a caricaturist than Charles Dickens, he is not a whit less humane—and with these two men—each in his own way—the grand theme to which they consecrate themselves is Humanity!

— A correspondent from London writes an anecdote of the Princess Royal, which—even if true, a thing we very much doubt—was old some seven years ago, when it might have been rather more appropriate. For to talk of sending a young lady sixteen years old to bed for calling a man "Brown," is a little out of place, especially as the young lady is just beginning to think of a foreign alliance. Besides, the story isn't faithfully told in manner as well as time. This is the way we heard it one pleasant afternoon on board a Spanish steamer, off Barcelona, in which we were enduring quarantine with an English party, fresh from court.

The Royal Miss, then seven or eight years old, took a fancy to call the physician who visited the nurseries of Buckingham Palace every morning, plain "Brown," instead of Sir, or Mr., as the case may have been. So, in the presence of her queenly mamma one day, the little rogue calls out:

"Brown, good morning! how do you do, Brown!" whereupon the mamma, very much shocked, gave the young lady a gentle reprimand, desiring her to repeat the salutation properly.

Little Princess pouted and put up her pretty shoulder, but the queen insisted.

"Well then, Brown, I say, how are you, Brown?" persisted the little lady, with an air of pretty willfulness very becoming, but not exactly what the royal mother had expected.

So, taking her hand gently, she desired she physician to withdraw till the young lady was brought under subjection.

A little time, and the physician was summoned, and the little lady desired to go through the proper salutation. She looked slyly up, her pretty mouth began to dimple, and with a half-frightened glance at mamma she calls out:

"Good morning, Brown—good morning, *Mr.* Brown, *if I must.*"

— A very significant indication of the advance of liberal views has been recently evinced in a report made to the Pennsylvania society of "Progressive Friends" upon the subject of amusements. The report not only sanctions music and dancing, so long under ban by our Quaker friends, but even says a good word for the theatre. The object of the report is described as being an effort to sever the unnatural connection between Religion and Asceticism, and to surround piety with all that is bright, animating, hopeful, and joyous—a direction in which the world has long been slowly moving, and a spirit which will eventually put its foot upon and crush out the old, unnatural, repulsive, Puritanical asceticism under which true religion has so long suffered.

In speaking of the theatre the report alluded to above asserts that the Drama has been progressive in reform, that it is quite capable of being made entirely acceptable to the strictest morality, but that at present it, as theatres are generally conducted, scarcely reaches a point to entitle it to the support of the friends of morality. Of this last clause one word: certain features of the theatre have always been condemned, and made a reason with many people for withholding their countenance. A few years ago fashion and popular taste in this city set strongly in favor of the theatre. The beggarly empty boxes which had so long appalled and looked dismally down upon the actors, began to fill with fashion and beauty. Society became strongly interested in the Drama—Respectability came down from its exclusive stool and nodded its august head approvingly—Shakspeare and Sheridan came out from their accumulated dust—and the hearts of managers and actors were glad. Now with this movement there disappeared—what? Why some of the most objectionable peculiarities of the theatre. And so it can be with every remaining offensive feature. The public have an absolute control of these things. If the theatre becomes the resort and amusement of the respectable portion of the public, the respectable portion of the public can make laws for the theatre, can, in its own all-potent voice, decide what shall be and what shall not. The Drama must always be a delightful amusement—peculiarly so to the highest refinement and the finest intellect—let us unitedly, then, take upon ourselves the Herculean task of cleansing Augean stables.

— A contemporary which devotes itself to the giving of wholesome advice to perplexed damsels and undecided youth upon the subjects of love and matrimony—with an occasional sprinkling of etiquette—in response to letters from ill-treated wives, imploring its advice upon so delicate a subject, magnanimously and consolingly replies that the only hope for them is to look for peace—in the grave! The soothing effect upon these unfortunate women of such agreeable, hopeful, pleasing, and animating consolation, must have been edifying indeed. It wouldn't be difficult, however, for these ladies, by an easy concatenation of ideas, to go a step further (or come a step nearer), and look for peace (where they would be likely to find it), in their husbands' graves!

—A WRITER in the "Home Journal" blesses the hand-organs. Does he do so, we should like to know, upon the principle of praying for his enemies? For our part, they are our abomination. They do, undoubtedly, occasionally give us a very sweet air, but they are so peculiarly malapropos in their appearance, as to be utterly unendurable. Just as sure as we are in the mazes of a thought more than ordinarily perplexing, or following up a train of impressions that need the entire concentration of the brain, a tune breaks out beneath our window, and away flies every thought we had. In vain we twirl our pen, purse our brows, and essay to concentrate our distracted attention upon the work before us, the jargon so pertinaciously ground out below, dissipates, distracts, confounds, bewilders—and sometimes enrages. There are certain traditions of home, among which quiet and seclusion are the most pleasing. Every one has a right to these, it must be conceded; then why must privileges so precious be audaciously trampled upon by a set of good-for-nothing, lazy Italians, with their horrible discord? Why must your sacred liberty and our sacred liberty be at the mercy of a wretched hand-organ—and a monkey? Music is a pleasure, a luxury, is it? Very well! We insist upon the right of electing time and place for the luxuries we are to enjoy. We don't want to be compelled to eat sugar-plums, let sugar-plums be ever so excellent, at the option of a second party. This evil, too, is alarmingly on the increase. Scarcely a morning passes without half-a-dozen of these creatures, affording an astonishing variety of ill-doing, come successively under our window. Sometimes coppers, sometimes threats, sometimes importunities will drive them away—sometimes the fellows are unimpressible blockheads, and won't move an inch for anything, and we must submit to their pleasure. For such fellows we wish for a Tarpeian rock. But, lacking this, we shall rejoice if we can hurl them out of the good graces of our citizens. They are lazy vagabonds, from whom we ought to be delivered.

—WE have just risen from reading "Napoleon's Letters to Josephine, and others," just published by Mason Brothers, and feel as if we had spent half a day at St. Cloud.

It is rather pleasant to get into the secrets of great men, and to learn how very much they are like other people, where the passions or affections are concerned. There is Napoleon now writing love-letters to his bride, as ardent and passionate as Byron ever perpetrated; and here is Josephine playing shy, and evidently keeping her hero-husband at arms' length, till he gets as jealous as Othello, apparently with a little better cause, though. Most of these letters are brief, ardent, and to the point: they give one glimpses of a heart originally warm with genial feelings, and a certain tenderness of character rather inconsistent with the emperor's exercise of iron will in after years.

Napoleon evidently loved Josephine with passionate warmth, till her own want of sympathy and his growing ambition prepared the way to that one fatal step of his life, which nothing could excuse or atone for.

As for Josephine, from first to last she seems far more in love with the emperor than *the man*. We find but little evidence of attachment till his growing fame awoke her pride, and his confirmed power, her ambition. Not a single letter, calculated to satisfy the craving of a passion like his, appears till after he becomes great. His letters, brief, warm, and hurried, are always craving for more affection than she seems willing to grant; few of her answers at this period are published, but we guess their unsatisfactory import by his complaints—sometimes pathetic, sometimes keen with sarcasm. At last, he became absolutely jealous, and from that time—after his return from the East—a change comes over his letters. It seems evident that there never was a hearty reconciliation of the parties after that. Jealousy must have uprooted at least a portion of the affection, up to this period so earnest and sincere. Josephine becomes anxious either to preserve his love, or the power connected with it. But his letters take a tone of authority, kind but firm, which strike the reader with a sense of his real greatness. He has not only become conqueror of Europe, but of his first, wild passion. Commands, delicately worded, but still commands, take the place of entreaties. Napoleon is no longer the lover, but the imperial husband. Then comes the divorce, and after that one can feel neither respect nor compassion either for Napoleon, Josephine, or Maria Louisa.

His letters to Josephine, are terse, unfeeling, and at times brutal; he triumphs in the success of his domestic treason; sends her coarse bulletins of the health and hopes of her rival, and when she allows the anguish, with which she is overwhelmed, to break out, coolly tells her that it is in *bad taste*.

But she deserved it all—every pang and more, if a man could be found brutal enough to inflict more. What right had she to consent to the gross indignity of that divorce, and expect clear-sighted and right-hearted persons to call it magnanimity? It was a sin against her own soul, and against God! That she consented, did not make it less a sin, but implicated her honor, and her morality in the fraud. Magnanimity! The surrender of her wifely rights was an act of mean cowardice. Had she been firm, he never would have dared to repudiate her. Then to become the pensioner of this man—to meanly petition him—the husband of Maria Louisa—for more money—to receive his grudging visits and take his reprimands for her extravagance tamely! Imagine an American woman playing this miserable role, and historians claiming sympathy for her and speaking of her signature to this insolent fraud as a piece of sublime magnanimity!

The editor of this book—Mr. Abbot—tells us that it is a revelation of the emperor's heart. A miserable glimpse we get of it, truly. No doubt he was in love with Josephine and with Maria Louisa also, the national facility of passion make duplication in these things easy. But in our primitive country, love like this is at a discount among honorable people, and it is not often that we find men capable of excusing it.

After all, what a revolting picture of French life these letters reveal! Just imagine them transpiring here in our presidential mansion, with the whole nation looking on. Imagine the whole country exhausting enthusiasm on a faithless husband turning his wife out of doors, and supplying her place by an insolent assumption of the power to break any bond that shackled his ambition.

Imagine a subservient wife taking her discharge, and suffering repudiation gracefully for so much a year—signing the deed of separation with her own hand, and expecting to be regarded as an angel of magnanimity, for this falsehood to herself!

Imagine all this done for a weak-minded, jealous woman, who coolly leaves her husband to his fate when his overthrow comes; and, instead of following him into exile, consoles her widowhood with a one-eyed husband, ten small children, and the shadow of a court in Italy.

Of these three persons one hardly knows which to condemn most, Napoleon or the two women who were ready to be dishonored before the world and through all history, that his ambition might be complete.

Insane as Mr. Abbot is regarding Napoleon, he will find it difficult to make any sensible American very much in love either with the emperor or his two self-married wives. Domestic treasons like his were fitly expiated on the solitary rock of St. Helena. As for Josephine, her greatest admirer can hardly dare to call her submission an act to be applauded, though she died with his name on her lips.

A wife who could live luxuriously on the favor of the man who had so wronged her, or, on the other hand, who could find the heart to entertain his conquerors, while he was a fugitive, deserves no credit for greatness, either of life or purpose. One cannot help pitying her, however, while a sort of desire to excuse his many faults, springs up in the heart with a glow of admiration for qualities which Napoleon's sins could not darken. As for Maria Louisa, she was neither worth condemning nor excusing.

LITERARY.

—*It is Never too Late to Mend*, the new novel by Charles Reade, author of "Peg Woffington," &c., is the most remarkable book we have read in a long time. It is one of the few productions to which the term *great* can be justly and honestly applied. With faults that are numerous and striking, it possesses qualities of no ordinary character. It has the true ring of genius. It is strong every way, even in its faults. There is a tremendous deal of work about it—it takes a wide and a huge grasp of things—it sounds the human heart, up and down, with a bold, free hand. With complications of plot that equal Bulwer's, and touches of character widely different but equal in quality to those of Dickens, it is more sinewy, compact, nervous, ringing—more of a high-blooded and horse-race nature, than the works of either of those authors. There was a quick pulse in the pen that wrote it—and a clear, unclouded, lightning intellect that guided the pen. Brain and heart are in it, working with all their might. The style is racy, clear, sparkling, and literally full of power. Characters are thrown off by a touch—human nature revealed by a word. You range from England to Australia. Events and incidents jostle each other, and fly by. You seem to be mounted on a courser. At times, it is melodramatic and improbable. It is marred by strained effects, and gives evidence of capriciousness and affectation. Short chapters ten or twelve lines long, eccentric printing and punctuation (an almost entire repudiation of the comma), absurd and contemptible wood-cuts, devices of the melo-drama in mysterious and sudden appearances, complications that belong only to the lowest order of fiction—these are things beneath Mr. Reade, and sadly affect this splendid work. Mr. Reade is a playwright, and frequently shows his vocation. But he is a man of too shrewd a sense not to detect his own dangers and weaknesses, and hereafter to avoid them.

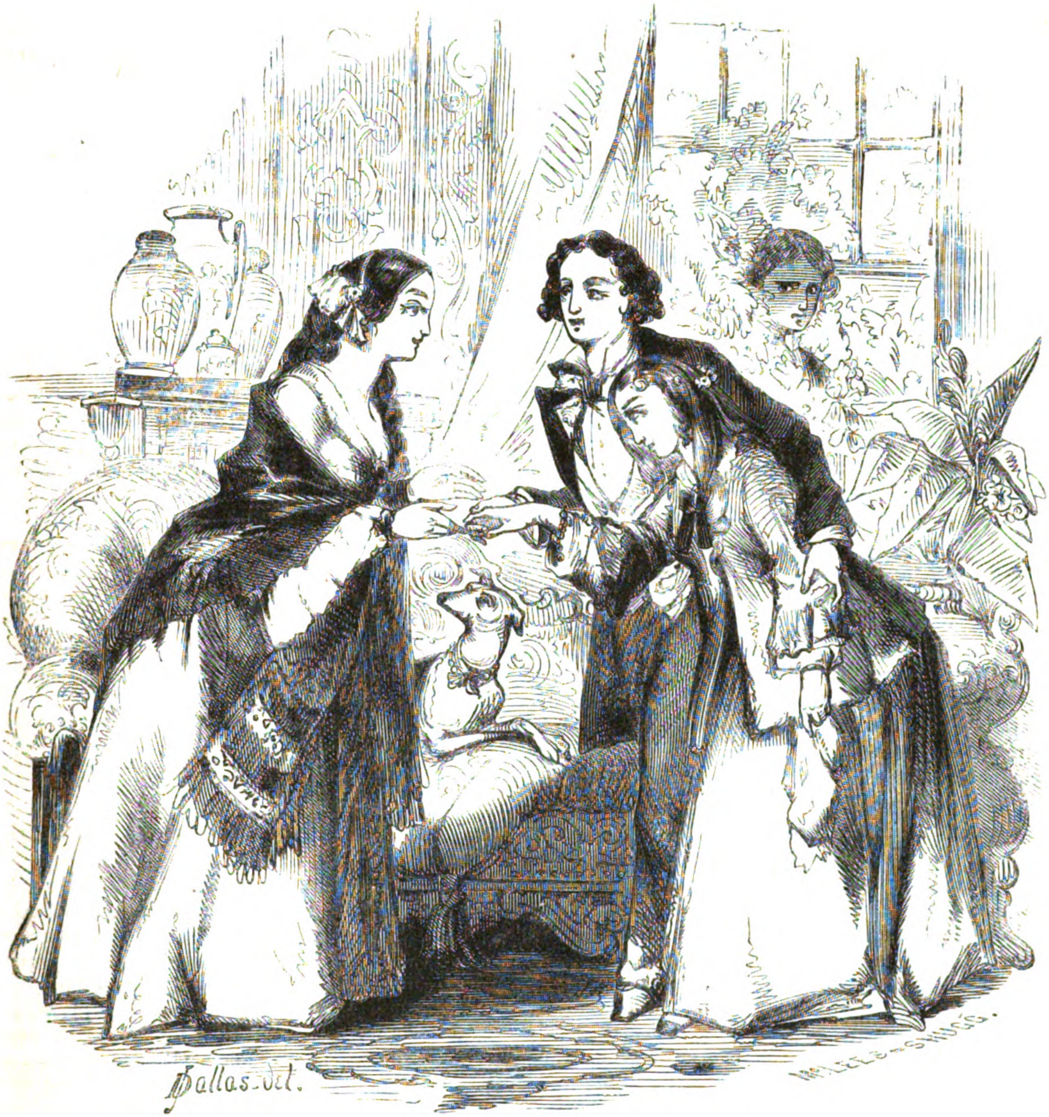
The story has two almost entirely distinct spheres of action—connected by the slightest possible thread. The first volume is occupied mainly by an outcry against the horrors of prison discipline. This part might well have been taken out, and, with a little domestic background, been erected into a distinct novel. The horrors which it depicts appear to be overdrawn, but we believe they are based upon exposures made a few years ago at the Birmingham gaol. The interest which is thrown around these prison scenes, is wonderful. They are dramatic, vivid, powerful, and carry the reader along as if upon a wave. In the second volume the scene shifts to Australia, where we are shown the first discovery of gold, the tumult and excitement which ensued—and are carried through a succession of scenes worked up to the highest pitch of dramatic interest.

We have not room to allude to all the various characters. Susan Merton is a woman after human nature; George Fielding, is a real rustic; Francis Eden, a glorious creation; Meadows, the unscrupulous and respectable something of an old stage part; Levi, the Jew, hardly in place in a "matter-of-fact romance." The situation of the lovers, and the domestic perplexities, are not very new, but compensate by a fresh handling. Altogether, and to conclude, let us say, that he who misses to read this work, misses a production that towers head and shoulders above the ordinary efforts of the day. (Ticknor & Fields.)

—*The Torchlight; or, Through the Wood*, is a new work by Harriet A. Olcott, author of "Isora's Child," a novel which made a favorable impression, and we think that the author has more than sustained her reputation by "The Torchlight." But it is unevenly written. The story is not particularly new, yet it contains some novelty of situation and peculiarity of character. The incidents are sometimes sadly jumbled. There is a collision between two boats on the Mississippi River confusedly told, and a long, romantic drive through the forests of Louisiana, very well told. The author has an eye for the picturesque, and gives us some wild and well-drawn pictures, described with a certain degree of pretension. Ralph Larkfield is a flesh and blood character, but talks with an absurd profusion of mythological characters. Fast young men are not usually so peculiarly classical. Jeannie, the heroine, is quite well managed—but let us have done with juvenile heroines. The principal fault of the book is its confused crowd of events, which are sometimes heaped upon each other with a lordly scorn of time and place. As a whole, it possesses power and interest. (Derby & Jackson.)

MRS. STEPHENS' NEW MONTHLY.

DECEMBER, 1856.



LOST JEWELS.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

CHAPTER XI.—EXPLANATIONS AND SURPRISES.

Ralph dared not confide in his brother James, as he had proposed to himself, and the elder Harrington was so occupied with his own conflicting thoughts that the momentary annoyance expressed by the youth had passed from his mind. He did not even remark that Ralph avoided any conversation with him, or that Lina was

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by Ann S. Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S., for the Southern District of New York.

paler than usual, and from time to time looked anxiously in his face, as if to draw some reassurance from its expression that might bring her back into the bosom of a family from which she felt all at once inexplicably repulsed. The General was absent, or remained in his own room, sending down word that he was occupied, and that the business of the day must go on without him.

Mabel was not yet well enough to leave her own immediate apartments. Thus it happened that a silent and uncomfortable meal followed every reunion of the family for some days after the storm, which seemed still brooding blackly over the household. James Harrington went forth again and again from the breakfast room, without regarding the anxious looks of his brother, or the tearful eyes of poor Lina, and both these young persons held him in that awe which is always felt when reserve and secrets creep into bosoms warmed with kindred life.

Poor Lina. She felt, in that splendid mansion, like Eve wandering through the bowers of paradise after the sentence of banishment had been passed upon her. Lonely and sad of heart, she sat hour after hour in her solitary chamber, waiting for some one to summon her, or ask some cause for the tears that came trembling with every thought to her heavy eyes. She avoided Ralph, for without his parents' consent, her own sensitive delicacy rendered the old intercourse impossible, and any other, wounded her to the soul with its restraints. Thus it happened that pretty, pure-hearted Lina sat in her room and wept.

But Ralph was more impetuous. After exploring every part of the old mansion, dragging out guns, fishing tackle, and other provocatives of amusement, only to put them back again in disgust—after rowing furiously up and down the river, unconscious and uncaring what course he took, the youth grew impatient under his restraints, and promptly resolved to break through them at any rate, as far as Lina was concerned. She should creep away in gentle silence, and spend her time in weeping no longer. He remembered that General Harrington had not forbidden them to meet as of old, and that his prohibition of speech could not extend to the mother, who had already been to some extent confided in. In short, Ralph was young, ardent, and restive of trouble, so, after a brief battle with himself, he resolved that the General had meant nothing by his prohibition, but to prevent premature gossip in the household.

When quite convinced of this, the youth cast all other thoughts aside, and sought out Lina in her solitude. She heard his footsteps with a leap of the heart, and a brightening of the eye which no sense of duty could check. How hopefully it sounded, how bold and firm it was. What had happened? Would he stop at her door?

Yes, yes, Lina! his heart bounds and throbs even more warmly than your own! His face is radiant with hope, which, without other source, springs out of his own buoyant nature. He has cast doubt behind him, and says, in answer to the arguments that struggle to get possession of his reason, "Let to-morrow take care of itself. I will see Lina to-day!"

He knocks at her door, and a smile that she cannot help, breaks through the trouble in Lina's eyes, as she arises with a thrill of mingled joy and dread, to let him in. She opens the door, and stands before him, blushing, and all in a tremor of delight, which will not be suppressed, but which her little heart says is very ungrateful and wicked, knowing, as she did, how wrong it was for her, a poor little outcast, to think of Ralph Harrington, when his mother is opposed to it utterly, and his father almost treats the whole subject with ridicule. Ralph has told her faithfully every word that passed between him and his father, and her delicate intuition detects the uncertainty and hollowness of it all. With these honorable feelings warring against the newly-awakened love in her heart, it is no wonder that gentle Lina trembled, and grew red and white again in the presence of her lover.

"Lina, dear, dear, Lina."

She reached out her hand. How could she resist beneath that bright, hopeful look? Her lips, that had begun to quiver, dimpled into a smile, as the soft fingers yielded themselves to his clasp. She attempted to reprove his coming, but that rebellious little mouth would only say "Ralph! oh, Ralph!" with a gush of tender joy in the words, which made the heart leap in his bosom, like a prisoned bird called suddenly by its mate.

"Lina, dear, dear, Lina! you look sad. Your poor eyes are heavy. You can bear this no longer. I am a man, and strong, but it almost kills me to be away from you. The General is away. I believe my mother is in her room. Come with me. Anything is better than seeing you suffer."

Lina drew back, and tried to wrest her hand from his grasp, but he only held it more firmly.

"No, no. I do not suffer any, hardly. Go away, Ralph, dear Ralph, go away, or it will kill me."

"I do not wish to see you unauthorized. Come to my mother, Lina!"

"No, no, I dare not. It kills me to remember that look."

"But I can endure these restraints no longer, Lina. My father, at least, does not withhold a conditional consent—surely our mother, the dearest and best woman that ever drew breath, will not be less generous. At any rate, we will know the worst. Come, Lina."

The young man, with his untamed will, drew the timid Lina firmly, but tenderly, from her vantage ground in the room, and hurried her away toward his mother's room.

Mabel was sitting up, calm and pale, like one who ceases to resist, though in the midst of a storm. She arose to receive her son with a gentle smile, and glanced kindly at Lina.

Ralph, full of impetuous warmth, threw his arm around the young girl, and brought her forward with gentle force.

"Mother, you have always loved her; now let it be more than ever, for my sake. She is all the world to me."

They were looking upward to Mabel's face—the one boldly and with honest confidence, the other shy and wistful—dreading the first glance, as if it had been a dagger. But an exclamation of astonishment broke from them both, at the sudden illumination of those eyes—at the smile that parted her lips, like sunshine forcing a red rose bud into sudden flower. Yes, the countenance of Mabel Harrington brightened into beauty then, and it was one which the heart leaped toward with gushes of tenderness.

The eyes of Ralph Harrington danced and sparkled in their joy, and Lina's brightened up, till the very tears shone like diamonds in them.

"Oh, mother, my blessed, blessed mother, how happy you have made us—how good you are!"

And yet she had not spoken a word. That eloquent face had done it all. She sunk slowly to her seat, sighing, but, oh! how pleasantly. Ralph seized her hand, which he covered with grateful kisses. Lina fell upon her knees, and burying her face in Mabel's lap, mingled soft murmurs with a world of broken sighs, as she had done many a time when a little petted child. Her gentle heart was brimful of thanksgiving, which she could utter in no other way.

"My children, you have made me so happy!" exclaimed Mabel, folding them both in her arms. "I never expected to be happy again, and lo! God heaps all this blessedness at my feet."

"I thought you were offended with me," said Lina, lifting her bright face to meet the pleasant glance bent upon her.

"Offended, darling! I misunderstood you. Why, lady-bird, did you call my son Ralph, Mr. Harrington?"

Lina blushed scarlet, and Ralph laughed, little dreaming what cruel struggles had followed this trifling change of names. Indeed, Ralph was rather proud of the new dignity with which Lina's bashful love had invested him; and Lina was greatly puzzled to know what great harm there was in calling so fine a young fellow Mr. Harrington, after all.

While they were hovering around Mabel's chair, overwhelming her with the abundance of their own happiness, there was a commotion among the passion-flowers at the window, and the vine was once so violently agitated, that some of its blossoms dropped away and fell through the sash-door; but no one of that happy trio heeded it, and Agnes Barker escaped once more from the balcony unseen.

And now Mabel was left alone, with the cup of bitter trial removed from her lips, and a flood of thankfulness gushing up from her heart. How she loved those two young people! How her eyes filled as she gazed after them!

She sat down in her easy-chair, serene and happy. The very absence of the harassing doubts that had tormented her, was in itself almost a bliss.

The day was quiet and dreamy—one of those late Indian Summer mornings, when existence itself seems heavenly. The sash was open, and the odor of heliotrope and roses came softly through, softening the sweet thoughts that floated in her brain, and becoming, as it were, a part of them. She became very languid and dreamy after this, for the strain upon her energies being removed, the reaction rendered her helpless as a little child. God had put aside the evil day. She was not to be wounded by those whom she had cherished closest to her heart. Ralph and Lina! How she loved to murmur over those names in her solitude! How pleasant it was to think of them, united, and still keeping the family bond unbroken.

Ralph had forgotten to enforce secrecy on his mother, and her first thought was to talk this new promise of family union over with James Harrington. Then, all at once, she remembered that since her accident, no message had been given her from him, and though he was always admitted to her boudoir with as little ceremony as her own son, that privilege had not been once claimed since the storm.

This thought fell like a shadow amid her serene contentment. She began to wonder at this strange desertion, and have a vague consciousness that something was wrong between them. Still, how could this be? Had not Harrington saved her life at the peril of his own? Was not his face, full of agonized hope, bending over her when she awoke from the midnight of the deep?

Mabel gave a sudden start, and her eyes took an expression of alarm. What if he were ill? What if the terrible exertions of that night had overpowered him, and all this was kept from her knowledge? Starting up under the excitement of this apprehension, she was approaching the door, when it opened, and Agnes Barker came in. The young woman looked more than usually excited that morning. The fire, which always lay smouldering in her evasive eyes, was kindled up, and a flush lay redly on her cheek, an evil flush, such as we may imagine the poison in a laurel plant to spread over its blossoms. In her hand she held a few leaves of verbena and rose geranium, encircling a white rose-bud, and a crimson rose, which had evidently been arranged with considerable care.

Mabel moved back to her seat, overcome by that strange thrill of repulsion which always troubled her at the approach of this girl.

"Who sent them?" she inquired, with a gleam of pleasure, as she saw the exquisite bouquet, "who sent them?" and with a look half wistful, half pleased, she reached out her hand. Agnes withheld the bouquet, smiling:

"I fear to give offence were I to part with it, even to you, madam. It was intended for me, I believe."

Mabel drew back her hand, stung by the smile, and recoiling proudly from any further question. A faint flush of self-reproach stole up to her forehead, for her heart had leaped back twenty years, when rose buds buried in fragrant leaves had been the mystic language by which her heart read the pulses of another.

Agnes stood before her gazing down into the tiny bouquet with apparent unconsciousness of the feelings she had aroused, and with a smile quivering about her lips, she began blowing dreamily into the half open bud, till it fluttered apart, and took an unhealthy bloom from her hot breath.

"Don't—it will sicken and droop," said Mabel, who could never see a flower rudely touched, without a sensation that it must feel a pang.

"But I shall have it in full bloom while it lasts," answered the governess, "and when that is gone, more will come: I like things that flash into a glow and out again."

Mabel was surprised; the girl, hitherto so retiring and quiet, had all at once taken an air of authority. There was something in the speech that shocked the heart more than the ear, and the sensitive woman felt a thrill of pain as she saw Agnes tear off a leaf from the crimson rose—place it between her lips—and fasten the cluster in her bosom. The quiet self-possession with which she did all this, was so unlike her usual manner, that Mabel sat regarding her in silent astonishment.

When Agnes had arranged the flowers to her satisfaction, she looked up.

"I beg pardon," she said, "for intruding, but Mr. Harrington told me that Lina was in here, and I hurried to join her, fearing that my walk after breakfast had encroached on the hour for lessons."

"Miss Lina has just left me," answered Mrs. Harrington, coldly, but with a quiver of the voice, "you will find her with my son somewhere about the grounds, I fancy."

Agnes looked out of the window, casting sharp glances over that portion of the grounds which it commanded.

"Oh," she said, "yes, it is a heavenly day—what a pity that you cannot go out," and, with a little haste in her manner, Agnes left the room.

Mabel looked out of the window, in time to catch a glimpse of James Harrington walking slowly and thoughtfully toward the shore. Directly Agnes Barker joined him, and they seemed to enter into conversation, but moved on, and were soon out of sight.

He was not ill, then, but avoided her purposely, and took long strolls with that strange girl. More and worse—no other hand could have arranged those rose buds. Years and years ago, she had worn such buds and leaves, tint for tint, upon her own bosom. Alas, that the memory gave her so much anguish.

Mabel went back into the room sick and faint; her heart was enveloped in shadows again.

Another knock at the door, a rambling timid knock, as if every knuckle of a great hand lent its own sound to the wood. Mabel was impatient and cried out, "come in, come in."

The door half opened and closed, opened again, and a huge foot was planted on a cluster of roses in the carpet. Another foot appeared, and our old friend Ben presented himself with a small basket on his arm, and a huge bouquet of wild flowers in hand.

"I beg pardon, marm," said the honest fellow, taking off his tarpaulin and setting it down by the door, "I begs any amount of pardons for this here intrusion, but I thought that you'd like to see these ere shiners afore the cook spiled their beauty on the gridiron; besides I found some blue asters and a tuft of golden-rod in a holler of the woods that the frost hasn't found out yet, and tied 'em up ship shape, thinking as you might like the smell on 'em, now that they've got so scarce.

The quick tears sprung into Mabel Harrington's eyes. She held out her hand with that beaming expression of face which rendered her at times so more than beautiful.

"Ben, my good old friend, you helped to save my life; how can I ever thank you enough!"

Ben took the white hand in his huge grasp tenderly as if it had been a newly-fledged dove. "Don't, don't, now, I can't stand it, that ere look knocks the pins from under me, circumvents me into a lubberly boy again. What was Ben Benson—the old scoundrel about, that he didn't do the hull thing hisself? Don't hurt the poor feller's feelins by thanking him for what he didn't do —he's ashamed of hisself, and hain't done nothing but rip and tear at hisself for a sneak and coward ever since."

"Oh, Benson, don't abuse yourself in this manner—I cannot speak all my thankfulness—I can never do enough for you. Sometimes, Ben, sometimes, I think you are the best, almost the only true friend that I have on earth—that is among the old friends, Ben."

Her eyes were full of tears. She pressed Ben's hard hand with her soft, snowy fingers.

"He'd die for you—that ere old weather-beaten chap —he'd die for you any minute, and never ask the reason; but don't talk to him in that ere way—it'll break his heart if you do. His eyes have sprung aleak already, and no pump rigged, nothing to help hisself with, but the cuff of his coat!"

"Well, well, I will not vex you with my thanks; but remember, good friend, I must always feel them. Now tell me what you have got in the basket. Something nice or beautiful, I daresay, for you bring the breath of the hills in your very clothes."

Ben sat down his basket, with a glow of satisfaction, and proceeded to display its contents: First, he removed a layer of crimson maple leaves, presenting a surface of bright golden tints underneath, which were daintily lifted from a bed of the softest and greenest moss in which a pair of superb speckled trout lay softly embedded. Ben looked up with a broad smile, as Mabel touched their spotted sides, gleaming up through the delicate green, as if the gorgeous coloring of the leaves which lay heaped upon the marble console had struck through, leaving prismatic stains behind.

"I thought," said Ben, peering affectionately down into the basket, "that a pair of these ere beauties might tempt you into eating something. I've been a watching 'em a good while in the holler of the rocks, just above where Miss Barker's nigger mammy lives. The brook that comes down by the side of her house is as pure as ice, and almost as cold, and that's the kind of water for fellers like this. Ain't they smashers, now? More'n a foot long, both on 'em, and sparkling like a lady's bracelet."

"Thank you, thank you. They will be delicious. I have tasted no breakfast yet. Tell the cook to prepare one for me."

"Will you have the goodness to trust that ere to Ben Benson, marm, and he'll see that there's no mistake this time. That same awkard chap brought a pair of shiners just like these, from the brook last night, and instid of gitting in here, as he expected they would, what does he see but that ar' gov'rness a-carrying them up in a silver platter to General Harrington's room, as if he'd been sick, and not the lady. If you've no objection, marm, Ben Benson 'll sarve these ere fellows hisself, for the brook hasn't got another of the same sort, if he beat brush for 'em a week."

"You are always kind," answered Mabel, "and it won't be the first time you have turned cook in my behalf. Do you remember, Ben, doing like services for me in Spain, years ago, when you insisted on leaving the ship, and turning courier for us all?"

"Don't I, now?" said Ben, and his face brightened all over. "Didn't Ben Benson? He was a smartish youngster then. Didn't he use to scour their skillets and sase-pans, to git the garlic out on 'em? But it wasn't of no use, that ere garlic strikes through and through even hard iron in them countries, and a'most everything you touch tastes on it, but the hard biled eggs that had tough shells to 'em, as I used to bile for you and the poor sick lady—they stood out agin it."

Mabel was looking sadly downward, and a troubled shadow came to her face as she murmured—

"Poor lady—poor lady! How she suffered, and yet how completely her disease baffled the Spanish physicians! That was a strange death."

Ben drew close to his mistress as she spoke. A strange meaning was in his glance, as he said, impressively—

"Lady, that was a strange death. I've seen consumption enough, but it wasn't what ailed *her!*"

Mabel lifted her eyes and looked anxiously at the honest face bent toward her. "How can you think so, Benson?" she said.

"Because I know who gave that lady her medicine o'nights, when you and the rest on 'em were in bed, and fast asleep; and I know that one time, at any rate, it wasn't of the same color or taste as that the doctor left, and she give it ten times when he told her once. I didn't think much about it at the time, but since then, it's constantly a-coming into my head."

Mabel was turning gradually pale, and, yielding to a sudden faintness, sat down.

"You do not think—you cannot think that there was really any neglect?"

"I didn't say nothing about neglect, marm—there wasn't much of that, any how, for the poor lady never had a minute to herself. That ere cream-colored gal was always a-hanging over her like a pison vine, and the more she tended her, the sicker she grew—any body with an eye to the windward, could see that without a glass."

"Benson, you surprise—you pain me!" cried Mabel, with sudden energy. "Great Heavens, what could have put this wild idea into your head?"

"It was in my head years ago, and went to sleep there," answered Ben impressively—"but the sight of just sich a face, and just sich a cretur, all but the color, prowling about this ere very house—in and out like a mouser—has woke up the idee agin, and my own mother couldn't sing it to sleep, if she rose from the dead with the old lol-lo-by on her lips. I wish something could drive it away, for it's all the time a sighing in my ear, like the sound of waves when they meet over a corpse."

"It is a terrible thought," said Mabel, shuddering.

"Now, don't go to turning pale nor nothing," said Ben, with prompt anxiety, "don't take it to heart, no how—just as like as not, it's one of old Ben Benson's sea-sarpents, that'll float off the minute it's touched, and if it does amount to any thing, ain't that individual here with his face to the wind, and his hand on the helm? Only do be careful what you eat and drink here alone, if that ere gov'rness is turning waiter for you or the General. There's a reason for it—be sartin of that."

"How foolish all this is," said Mabel, striving to laugh. "One would think, Benson, that we lived in Italy, when the Borgias made poison an amusement, instead of being quiet people in the quietest land on earth!"

"The quietest country on earth," answered Ben, reflecting over her words with a hand buried deep amid the jack-knives, bits of twine, and lumps of lead, in his deepest of deep pockets. "That ere sentiment used to sound beautiful on a Fourth of July, when I was a shaver, but it's took after my example, and outgrown itself a long shot. Why, marm, there ain't ere a day but what some poor woman goes through a post mitimus, and two or three men are found with their skulls driv in by sling shot down in the city, to say nothing of them that never git under the crouners hands, but are put away with a doctor's pass, into the grave that somebody should be hanged for filling. I can't go out a-fishing on the Hudson now, marm, without a feeling that some gang of rowdies may set upon me and steal my boat. I can't go into the city with a sartinty that a bowie knife won't be buried in my side, before I get home. In short, marm, I don't believe in calling countries quiet where murders and amusements go hand in hand. America was a peaceable country once, but it ain't that thing no longer. Them ere Borgers, as I've hearn, did their murders softly and arter dark, and it won't be long afore we learn to do the thing genteelly, as they did. I tell you, marm, I don't like strangers a-running about this house while you and Miss Lina live in it. Ain't the old sarvants enough—and what have they done to be turned out of doors?"

"Who has been turned out of doors, Benson? No one by me," said Mabel, a good deal surprised by this harangue.

"No, marm—but they're dropping out of their places softly marm, as the leaves fall out yonder, without the least idee what wind strikes 'em. Yesterday, the old cook, as has been in your kitchen twenty years, got her discharge. To-morrow, for anything that old feller knows, Ben Benson may git his mitimus, and when he asks to see the lady as he's sarved heart and soul since he was a boy a'most, they'll tell him as they did the cook—that this ere lady is sick, and can't be troubled with such matters."

"And have they discharged my cook—poor, faithful Nancy? Is this so, Benson? Who has done it? How dare they!" cried Mabel, surprised and indignant. "Why did she not come to me? Has Nancy really gone?"

"Yes, marm, I saw her myself go off to the city, with a bandbox under her arm, and a man behind, carrying her trunk."

"But what was her offence?"

"She didn't keep the General's woodcocks quite long enough to make 'em tender—sarved 'em up too fresh and sweet—I don't know of nothing else that they brought agin her."

"And she has gone—actually gone!"

"Bag and baggage, marm; they made clean work of it."

"They? Of whom do you speak? Not of Lina, not of Mr. Harrington—who, but the General, himself, would dare to discharge my servants?"

"In course, nobody but the old Gineral could do it; but that are gov'rness, marm, as has been a whispering with him in his room and out on it, ever since you've been shut up here. She's been a-doing some of that ere Borger work in a new way, pizening the mind, instead of the stomach. Since that ere black-eyed pussy-cat came here and got to mousing around, there hasn't been a mite of comfort anywhere, in-doors or out. The very boat, as was as kind a craft as ever tuk to water 's got to running contrary, and is allus cutting across currents, and tussling agin the wind. It ain't Christian, and as like as not, it's slandering the poor feller to say it, but my 'pinion is, that Ben Benson's a-beginning to hate that ere gal like pizon."

Mabel was so occupied with new thoughts, that she did not hear the conclusion of this speech, but sat gazing steadily on the carpet.

"What can all this mean," she reflected. "The General has not been to see me since the first day of my illness; then the half insolent air of this girl—the discharge of my old servant, what can it mean?"

"More 'an this," continued Ben, warming up, "Nelly the chambermaid is a going. She says that things don't suit her, and she's got too many mistresses, by half, for her money!"

"This is very strange," said Mabel, rising with that firm moral courage, which always prompted her to face a difficulty at once. "Say to the General, that I wish to speak with him."

"The General isn't at home Mar'm, and hasn't been since yesterday."

"Very well, Benson, I shall dine with the family; a household always goes wrong when its mistress is away."

"And shall I cook these beauties for you?" inquired Ben, gathering up the moist leaves, and laying them over the trout again, with pleasant alacrity; "the new cook mayn't know how to manage 'em; I don't want to flatter that ere conceited feller—but Ben Benson does know how to cook a trout arter he's catched it."

"Do as you please, Benson; they will certainly taste better from your hand than if prepared by a cook whom I have never seen."

"In course they will," answered Ben, taking up his basket. "I'll go down to the kitchen, and get things under way."

Mabel saw him depart almost unconsciously. The morning had been one of surprises and painfully conflicting feelings. She felt that a crisis in her life had arrived, that the time for dreamy thoughts and gentle endurance was at an end, and her strength rose to meet the occasion. The lassitude and nervous reluctance to give up her seclusion which had oppressed her of late, gave way, and with that dignity which is born of womanly self-command, she changed her toilet, and passed from the solitude of her sick room.

The sitting-room which we described in the past chapter of this narration was empty when Mrs. Harrington entered it. The luxurious easy-chairs stood about the floor, as if recently occupied, and the fire of hickory-wood burned brightly behind a fender of steel lace-work that broke the light in a thousand gleams and scattered it far out on the moss-like rug. Everything is as she had left it, even to the position of her own easy-chair in a corner of the bay window, but the absence of all living objects chilled her, and a presentiment of perpetual loneliness crept slowly to her heart, as she sat down, looking out of the window with that peculiar vividness of interest which we always feel in seeing familiar objects after convalescence.

The gorgeousness and wealth of the autumn had gone by during her illness; a few red and golden trees, contrasted with the hemlocks and pines in sheltered hollows; but, on the hill-tops, half the trees had cast off their leaves, while those which clung to the boughs had lost all their vivid tints, and thrilled mournfully to every breath of wind, like humanity trembling at the approach of death.

But the calm flow of the Hudson was the same. Its hills might be stripped of their affluent foliage, the grass grow crisp along its banks, but this had no effect on the grand, old stream, that flowed on ever the same, like that river of Christian faith that Mabel fed from the humble springs of a heart, already smitten down to its deepest waters.

She was a strong woman, that Mabel Harrington, and knew well that no trouble could fall upon her, of which she had not already tasted the bitterness, and lived.

But the flow of those waters, gliding by her ever and returning no more, filled her with mournfulness. She felt like a pilgrim who drops his scrip on the wayside for a moment's rest, and dreads the hour when he must take it up and toil on, with a patient hope of finding some shrine at which he may repose, though none is in sight.

"Well," she murmured with a patient smile, which came across her mobile features with a gleam of heavenly beauty, "Let it flow on, this earthly life;

be it laggard or fast, the moments that we leave behind but send us onward with a swifter speed. The descent grows steeper every day, and years rush on impetuously, as hours did in that beautiful time of youth. The stream of life was impetuous then. Now it is slow and powerful, nor stops to foam and ripple at the troubles that are always falling, like drift wood, upon it."

Thus Mabel mused within herself—confident that some stern trial was at hand, but resolved to meet it steadily, and trust to God for help. She needed such help; for, in solemn truth, the great battle of her life was at hand.

The door opened softly behind her, as she sat gazing upon the river. The back of her chair was toward him, and James Harrington saw only the garments of a female flowing downward to the carpet; and, thinking that it was Lina, he came into the room. He, too, had been gazing upon the scene without, and thoughts kindred to those stirring in Mabel's heart, had left him sad and gentle as a child.

"Lina, my sweet child," he said, approaching the chair, "I am glad to find you indoors."

Mabel started at the sound of his voice, with a quick leap of the heart; then, she arose slowly and stood up, holding forth her hand, as a sister might claim congratulations of her brother after illness.

"It is not Lina, James, but one whom you will not be less pleased to see, I am sure. How is this? You look pale and careworn, my friend; have you, also, been ill?"

For one instant, the flash that lighted up Harrington's eyes was dazzling—the next, he grew calm again; but the expression of his face was unutterably mournful.

"I had a very long walk; the fine weather tempted me too far," he said, with a faint smile, relinquishing her hand almost the moment it was taken.

He did not inquire after her health, but stood for a moment, thoughtfully regarding her.

Mabel smiled, and instantly his own features grew luminous.

"I am glad, I am very glad to see you so much better," he said, yielding to the old friendly habit; "it has been very lonely without you."

"I hope you missed me," said Mabel, the pure joy of an affectionate heart breaking over her face. "That was a fearful night, Harrington."

"It was, indeed, fearful. I shudder to remember that night. It seems impossible to imagine anything more dreadful than the scene, as that steamer ploughed over your boat. When you came up, with the blue lightning quivering around you, the rocks seemed to reel under my feet. Nothing but the power of God could have saved you then."

"I remember—I knew it all," said Mabel, lifting her clasped hands gratefully upward. The last thing that left me, was your figure on the rock; no, not on the rock, but midway between me and the bleak waves. I tried to scream, but the waters choked me."

Harrington took her hand, and wrung it with unconscious warmth.

"Thank God, it is over," he said fervently.

"I do thank God, first, that I am alive, and, then, that it was one of our own household that saved me. But this coming back from death, it is full of pain, to which the last agony seems but little. The scene around that old tree haunts me yet."

"And me," said Harrington, thoughtfully.

"You all looked so strange and wild, I could not comprehend the identity of any one. Even Ben Benson appeared like an angel luminous from Heaven, and that cedar a pillar of holy flame, around which he ministered."

"You did not know any of us, then?" inquired Harrington, eagerly.

"I did not know myself, for I, too, seemed like an angel, bound to love everything around me, as heavenly spirits do."

"Then you remembered nothing?" questioned Harrington, bending his earnest eyes upon her with a power that would have won the truth from a statue.

She did not blush; her eyes looked quietly and truthfully into his, and a pang both of joy and regret came to his heart, as he regarded the innocence of that look.

"It was, after all, a pleasant hallucination," said Mabel, "for even the governess, whom I do not much like, seemed transformed into a seraph, as she bent over me. As for Ben Benson, he was really sublime."

"Thank God!" answered Harrington, but the exclamation was followed by a deep sigh, as if the anxiety preying upon him had been changed, not entirely removed. Still there was a relief and freedom in his manner, as he drew a chair up to the window, and fell into his old habit of talk.

"Why is it," inquired Mabel, "that you have not once been to inquire after me? It was very strange."

"I did inquire after you every day," was the rather embarrassed answer.

"I did not hear of it," said Mabel, easily satisfied, and too happy for repining at anything.

"You may not know," answered her companion, "that I have been making arrangements to go abroad?"

"Abroad? But when—why?"

"Indeed, it seems impossible to give a reason, except that my health seemed to require change."

"Your health?"

"Remember, please, that your first remark was about my looks."

"But you are not really suffering?"

"Not now—not as I have been."

"But you will leave us?"

Harrington left his seat, and began to pace the room, as was his habit, when conflicting thoughts beset him. Mabel followed his movements sadly with her eyes, which were eloquent of a thousand gentle feelings.

"And you *will* go?" she said at last, with a quiver o the voice. "You will leave us all?"

"No," answered Harrington with energy, "I will not go. Why undertake a pilgrimage when there is nothing to gain, and nothing to avoid."

"Thank you—thank you," said Mabel, with her eyes full of tears.

At this moment there was a slight stir in the hall, and Ralph came in, followed by Lina, both brilliant and smiling, as if the conservatory in which they had been loitering away the hours, had bathed them with the perfume of its blossoms.

"Oh, mamma, this is so pleasant!" cried Lina, stealing forward and seating herself on a cushion at Mabel's feet. "Isn't this a beautiful, beautiful day?"

"All days are beautiful to the light-hearted," answered Mabel, burying her hand fondly in the golden curls that fell, a perfect network of light, from Lina's drooping head. "I thought it very dull and heavy this morning; now, the air seems invigorating as old wine. Still, I think the day itself has changed but little."

"Hasn't it?" questioned Lina, looking up tenderly through the sunny mist of her hair. "But you are so much better, and look so blooming—perhaps it is that."

"Perhaps," said Ralph, stooping down and kissing his mother's forehead, "it's because we are all together again; even this room seems like a desert, when our lady mother is absent. This should be a gala day with us; what shall we do, Lina? Crown her with roses, or bring an offering of fruit and nuts from the hills."

"I will give her some music," answered Lina, springing up and taking her guitar from a sofa, where it had been lying, neglected and untuned; "mamma shall have a serenade."

Lina flung the broad, blue ribbon attached to the guitar over her neck; and, seating herself again, began to tune her instrument, with her pleasant eyes lifted to Mabel's face.

"Now, what shall it be about," she inquired, casting a half-coquettish look at Ralph, and blushing like a damask rose beneath the highness of his eyes. "What shall I sing about, mamma?"

"Oh, love, sing of nothing but love, to-day, sweet Lina," whispered Ralph, as he stooped down and pretended to adjust the ribbon over her white neck.

"Shall I, mamma?" said Lina, with an arch glance upward.

"Sing anything that pleases you," answered Mabel.

"Then it shall be some lines, mamma, that I found in an old book in the library, with the leaves of a white rose folded in the paper. It was yellow with age, and so were the poor, dead leaves. I took it to my room, learned it by heart, and found out that it went by the music of an old song which Ralph and I used to sing together. That is all I know about love," continued the lovely rogue, with a blush and a glance upward.

"Well, well, pretty torment, begin," whispered Ralph, again busy with the ribbon.

For a moment, Lina's little hand fluttered like a bird over the strings of her guitar; then it made a graceful dash, and her voice broke forth:

Like a water-lily floating,
  On the bosom of a rill,
Like a star sent back to Heaven,
  When the lake is calm and still;
A woman's soul lies dreaming,
  On the stilly waves of life,
Till love comes with its sunshine—
  Its tenderness and strife.

Then hope grows bright and glorious,
  Her faith is deep and strong,
And her thoughts swell out like music
  Set to a heavenly song;
Her heart has twinn'd its being,
  And awakes from its repose
As that water-lily trembles
  When its chalice overflows.

Then she feels a new existence—
  For the loveless do not live!—
The best wealth of the universe
  Is hers to keep and give—
Wealth, richer than earth's golden veins
  That yield their blood to toil,
And brighter than the diamond lights
  That burn within the soil.

Oh, her soul is full of richness,
  Like a goblet of old wine
Wreathed in with purple blossoms
  And soft tendrils of the vine;
Its holy depths grow luminous,
  Its strings are sweet with tune,
And the visions floating through it
  Have the rosiness of June.

Oh, she counts not time by cycles,
  Since the day that she was born!
From the soul-time of a woman
  Let all the years be shorn
Not full of grateful happiness—
  Not brimming o'er with love—
Not speaking of her womanhood
  To the Holy One above.

Mabel gave a start as the first words of this melody fell upon her ear, and the slow crimson crept over her face; she kept her gaze steadily on the carpet, and had any one looked at her, the sadness of her countenance must have been remarked. But the young people were occupied with each other, and James Harrington sat, like herself, preoccupied and listening. As Lina broke into another and lighter air, the two looked up, and their eyes met. The blush on Mabel's cheek, spread and glowed over her brow and temples. She arose, and went to the window.

"You have heard this before, I think," said Harrington, following her.

"Yes," answered Mabel, regaining self-control; "and always truthful. I remembered it at once."

"And the author?"

Again Mabel blushed. "Oh, it was written years ago, when life was more vivid."

"Then you were the author?"

"Oh, yes; why not. I wrote a great many trifles like that at one time."

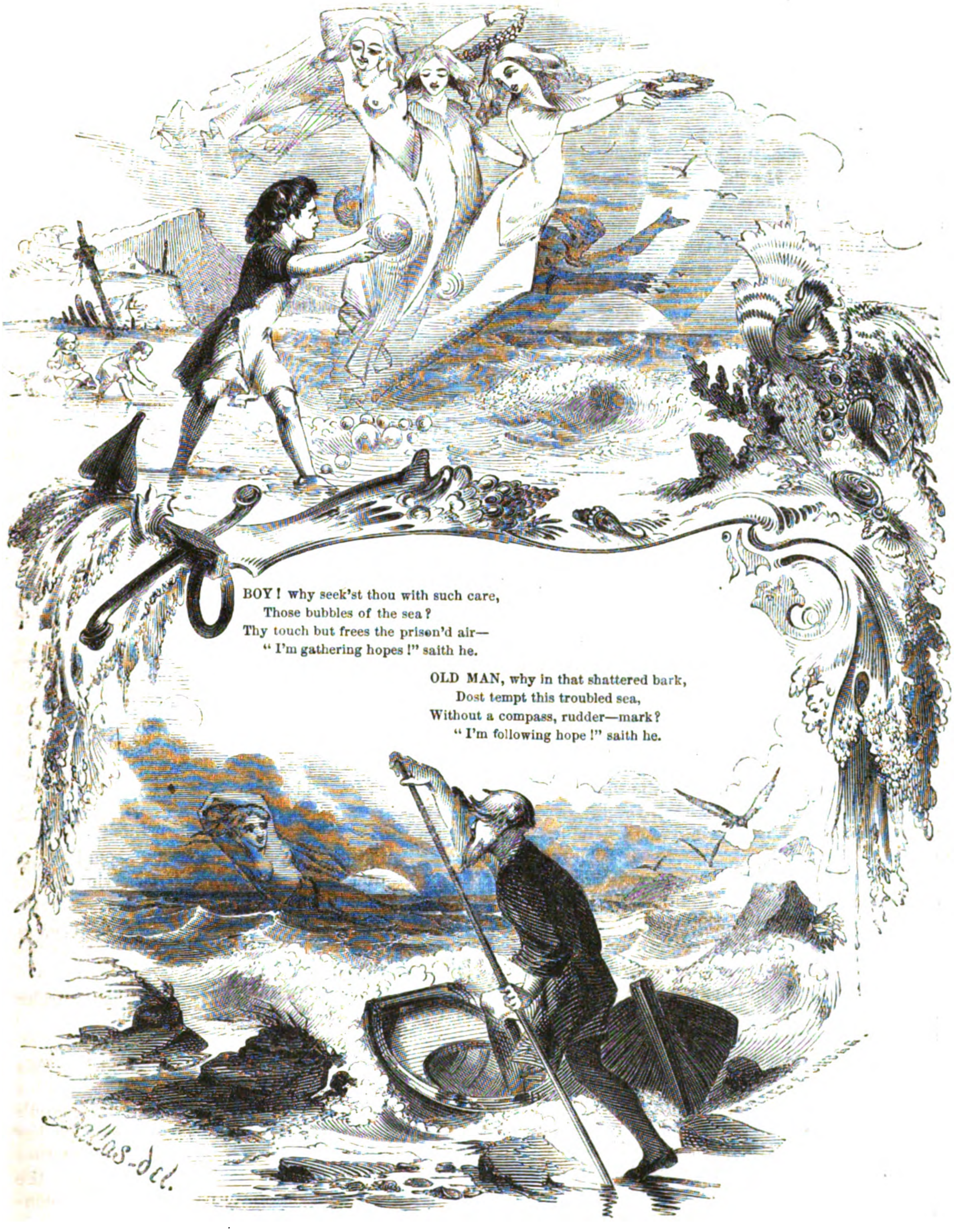
"I knew it; I was sure of it."

That instant the governess came in, followed by Fair Star, who began to plunge and caper at the sight of his mistress. Agnes looked keenly at Mrs. Harrington's flushed face; but, the covert smile, dawning on her lip, vanished, as she saw Ralph in the chair his mother had abandoned, bending over Lina; who sat upon the cushion, trifling with her guitar, from which, in her confusion, she drew forth a broken strain, now and then.

(To be continued).

THE POETRY OF THE PENCIL,

BY J. A. DALLAS.



BOY! why seek'st thou with such care,
Those bubbles of the sea?
Thy touch but frees the prison'd air—
"I'm gathering hopes!" saith he.

OLD MAN, why in that shattered bark,
Dost tempt this troubled sea,
Without a compass, rudder—mark?
"I'm following hope!" saith he.

HAROLD:

A TALE OF TO-DAY, IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

BY OLIVER BUNCE,

AUTHOR OF "LOVE IN '76," "BLANCHE DEARWOOD," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—IN TOWN—CALAMITY.

I do not purpose to more than briefly allude to my town career. My limits compel me to hasten on to those great events which immediately concern my story.

It was but one step from the Train into the heart of the great city—but that one step was over a gulf. It cut my life in two. Behind was boyhood, happiness, love, dreams, ambition, virtue—before, what? Answer, ye disappointed legions!

It was very different from what I had dreamed, this advent into the city. Where was the quick blood, the high hope, the eager pant, the proud strength? In their stead, O miserable heart of man! was bitterness, remorse, fury, and misanthropy—that passion so often affected by youth, but so truly terrible when really possessed by them.

But I tightly grasped my MS., and through all the clouds that dampened and enshrouded my spirit, the old eager longing for fame and greatness would at moments flash up. A very little experience, however, almost entirely extinguished it. The publishers laughed at my book. They would not touch it. They told me confidentially that they had barrels of such stuff; that novels were a glut; that everybody had taken to writing novels (if I had only been born twenty years before); that not one book out of ten paid expenses; that the trade was done up; etc., etc., etc.

I tried them all. Not one would listen to me. I began to comprehend some of the difficulties of the "trade" (as my father *would* call the profession), and to see that it was no "primrose path of dalliance" I was proposing to tread, but a hard, rough road; that success could only reward huge exertion; that I, and others like me, sitting down in the quiet of our homes to indite our pretty sentiments and prank out our bookish conceits, with an experience of life and the world bounded by the view from our parlor windows, and a knowledge of the requirements of the art perfectly infinitesimal—might as well think of flying to the moon as achieving success.

One old gentleman took me by the button-hole, after turning over the pages of my MS. for ten or fifteen minutes, and said: "Burn it, young man. It has served its purpose in exercising your strength—let it go. It would ruin you if it were published. Forget it. Study, observe, mature, fuse your elements of thought and your acquisitions of observation; take time, and plumb human nature, and plumb the art—then, if you have genius, judgment, and tact, you *may* succeed."

May succeed, after all that! I rushed to my lodgings and crammed the MS. into the depths of my trunk, and swore it should rot there.

But I needed employment, and was not ready yet to forego my hope of literary fame—now rendered, however, a distant eventuality. I had seen the advertisement of a weekly literary paper, in a number of which a series of engravings had pictorially illustrated the whole process of getting up so huge an affair as a weekly newspaper. Among these illustrations was one which gave an interior view of that mystery of mysteries—an editor's sanctum sanctorum. It was a large room, with windows from floor to ceiling, heavily curtained; splendid chandeliers hung pendant from the ceiling, over elegantly carved tables covered with books and papers; around each table (three in number) were grouped half a dozen gentlemen in perfect toilettes, profoundly absorbed in writing and reading (the shears were not introduced); pictures hung from the walls; the floors were richly carpeted; people were flowing in and out of the open door—in brief, it was a busy, animated, elegant scene.

At first, I was appalled by so much splendor, but after a little hesitation, I determined to make an effort to be enrolled in so desirable an editorial corps.

I went to the street and number indicated. To my surprise, I found the building a low, shabby, tottering affair. Can it be possible, thought I, that such elegant offices exist in this broken-down structure?

I ascended the creaking, dusty, rotten stairs, but when I reached the head of the first flight, a scene of so much squalor, dirt, and rubbish presented itself, that I turned back and went down again, convinced that I had mistaken the building. No, I was right—and there was nothing to do but go up again. Groping my way through a narrow passage, with walls black and smoky, with occasional eruptions of the brown mortar, and a window at the end with every pane an old newspaper, I came to a door, and, by the dim light, succeeded in spelling out upon a tin sign the name of the paper, the mystic inner-temple of which I was seeking. I opened the door, and hesitatingly entered.

Look upon this picture, and upon this! Hamlet's remark so forced itself upon me, and I was so confused with the contrast between fact and fancy which the scene before me afforded, that I could scarcely speak.

It was a room about ten by twelve. It contained a table, heaped up with broken envelopes, papers, torn and tattered manuscripts, sand, wafers, veteran pens—

in fact, a medley, with confusion rampant. A great pile of newspapers was thrown up in one corner. Two windows, plentifully cob-webbed, admitted a yellow light. The floor was greasy and unswept. At one end was a counter, with a boy behind it, folding papers damp from the press. He was rags, *cap-à-pie*. He was jacketless, and his shirt was only a shirt by the largest poetical license—in fact, an aggregation of rags and dirt!

An unwholesome-complexioned fellow sat at the table, writing with a worn quill pen on long, yellow slips of paper. He looked melancholy and decayed—in keeping with his surroundings.

The first astonishment at this scene was succeeded by an irresistible desire to laugh, but I smothered the inclination behind my handkerchief.

The simple-hearted fellows who wrote the Arabian Nights, are supposed to have possessed imagination. What a delusion! What was their puny invention to that of a modern advertiser?

I stated my business to the unwholesome-complexioned gentleman in waiting. He received it with vast condescension. He had lots of such offers; but what could I do?

Nothing definite resulted from this interview, but one was appointed for the morrow—and I managed to find a small circumstance or two on which to hang my hopes. After half-a-dozen conferences, a bargain was closed, by which I was employed as paragraphist, advertisement inventor, manuscript-reader, and to do all sorts of hack-work—at a price which I don't mean to confess.

And this was my literary advent. I soliloquized my old, grand dreams thus: How are the mighty fallen!

Two weeks utterly disgusted me, and I threw up my situation, with all its emoluments, privileges, and immunities. I tried other *literary* situations, with equal success and corresponding disgust. I published some stories which nobody took any notice of; some witticisms which I had to explain; some poetry which I was accused of stealing. At the same time, another kind of literature I was publishing, was copied and recopied conspicuously into every paper, and read by tens of thousands—in the shape of advertisements!

I began to look around for another profession—and, as if my father guessed the state of my affairs, a postscript in one of his letters timely suggested that if tired of literature, he would give me a letter of introduction to an eminent lawyer, in whose office I could be entered as a student, if I desired it. Gulping down my pride, I wrote back, and said I did desire it—and six days therefrom saw me immersed in Blackstone.

Meanwhile, nothing from Grace—no word, no mention—nothing by which I might climb back to the old happiness. At the bottom of my heart, I do not believe that I doubted her. I had always a secret expectation of an eventual understanding. I was enraged at what I had seen—at times, darkly and furiously disposed to believe her false—but I must confess that as time wore on, the secret consciousness of my own precipitancy grew upon me, and I felt stronger and stronger the desire for a reconciliation. But vain, proud, conceited, I was idiot enough to secretly look for her to extend me the olive leaf. I confidently expected an explanation by which I might gracefully descend from my high and aggrieved position, and take her into my confidence and love again! I dreamed it all out, and the stormy passions that first possessed me, gradually grew calm under the soothing influence of these expectations. I had quarrelled in true lover's fashion, jealously, arrogantly, exactingly, conceitedly, and now expected to get back again in true lover's fashion—a flood of tears, a kiss, and all right again. I was tremendously mistaken. Grace was not the woman to surrender herself to the ebb and flow of my caprices. I was to learn that only remorse and contrition on my part could bring back peace again.

In this story the reader has discovered long since that I am no hero—and that I am not painting myself as one. I make a free breast of all my follies—huge as they were.

But, I confess that through my armor of vanity and stubbornness, I did feel remorse and pain. I had rejected Grace's offer of amity in the forest on that last frantic ride to the Train. Had I not seen her then, and had I brought away with me the clear, simple recollection of the scene beneath the oak—Harold in her arms, and his fingers toying with her locks—there would have been apparent justification for my jealousy and rage. But as it was, in rational moments I upbraided myself for the insane bitterness and obstinacy with which I had conducted that interview. I felt how madly and blindly I had thrown away my happiness. There were moments when I was ready to tear myself; when I heaped imprecations upon myself, when I set up my folly as a thing apart, and reviled at it with bitter fury and passionate scorn.

With such shifting emotions, with clouds for ever trailing over the sky, lightening and deepening from no adequate cause, months passed away. Letters came frequently from my father and from Imy—but never a word or allusion to Grace.

My father's letters spoke often of Harold and his father. Harold's infirmity deepened every day, so the letters ran, and this sight was of such exquisite anguish to Mr. Clarefield, that it seriously affected his health. One letter closed in this wise: "I am alarmed on account of Mr. Clarefield's health. Our Northern autumn, I fear, does not agree with him, and his grief for poor Harold is so poignant, that these two things combine to undermine his constitution. He appears to me to be going into a rapid decline."

I recalled his hollow cheeks, which had struck me the first moment I beheld him; and also the paleness which rested upon his features the day of my departure.

Every letter now contained some allusion to his health. It was, "Mr. Clarefield is unwell;" Mr. Clarefield's health continues to grow worse;" "I grow more and more anxious about Mr. Clarefield;" "Doctor Ellington privately informs me that Mr. Clarefield is in a rapid decline;" "Mr. Clarefield is not long for this world." Then a letter from Imy, with this postcript;

"I cannot conceive anything more sad than to watch Mr. Clarefield. He evidently feels that he can live but a little while, and he will stand for hours, when he thinks he is unobserved, watching Harold with an expression of so much anguish and pain, that it makes me weep to see him." Then other letters from my father; "Mr. Clarefield has a violent cough, and has frequent hemorrhages;" "Mr. Clarefield will not live many weeks;" "We are daily expecting a sad event;" "Mr. Clarefield is dying;" then the entrance into the office one morning of a telegraph boy (one of those ragged Mercuries who carry about with them life and death between greasy thumb and finger, casting a shadow into one circle, a sunbeam into another), and placed before me an ominous envelope. I tore it open:

"He is dead. Come."

I took the night train, and arrived at the station a little after midnight. I found a carriage waiting for me, and Imy bundled up in it, shivering in the cool October air, but patiently and determinedly retaining her place.

"I could not help coming down to meet you, Mark," said she, "for, how could I wait till morning to see you. Father, at first, wouldn't listen to it, but I coaxed him into another decision."

I jumped in by her side. Jack (our grey-headed Factotum), gathered up the reins, and off we started at a gallop.

I wound my arms around Imy's waist, and drawing her close, eagerly inquired the particulars of Mr. Clarefield's death.

"You have come too late," said she; "he was buried yesterday."

"So soon?"

"It was necessary on account of Harold, Mark. Oh, your heart will ache to see him. He became utterly uncontrollable after his father's death. The sight of the body made him so violent—moaning and raving by turns, at one moment weeping convulsively, at another in a perfect frenzy—that we were obliged, for his sake, to hasten the funeral."

"Alas, what will become of him now? His father was the only one who could soothe and quell his turbulent brain."

"The only one but Grace. Why, what's the matter, Mark?"

I had started involuntarily, as if shot by a bolt. "Nothing, Imy. Go on."

"There is something you are to learn, Mark, about Grace and Harold, which is very strange, and which I am forbidden to tell you."

What could it all mean? Could it be within the wildest possibility that Grace was to become united to this madman? However fascinated by him at first, it would be worse than madness on her part to entertain any such idea, now, when his reason lay utterly shattered and dethroned. Then what could be this strange thing between them, of which Imy was forbidden to speak?

"Forbidden to tell me, Imy? Why, that is singular."

"Father is to explain it all to you. Don't ask me any questions about it, Mark, for you know how hard it is for me to keep a secret."

"Then I will not," said I, and began to muse moodily.

It was a crisp, cool night. The stars stood sharp in the sky, like diamonds. The forests, even by the starlight, showed faintly their varied hues; and the ground over which we rapidly spun, was strewn with ravaged autumn leaves. Presently we came in sight of the river. It ran darkly and noisily, swollen, as it appeared, by recent rains. Imy shivered as we came near it.

"What is it, Imy?" said I, "are you cold?"

"No, but the river, Mark. You recollect its singular effect upon Harold. It fascinates him now, more than ever. He is frantic to be near it. And I am so weak, that I shudder whenever I look at it. It appears to me as if it in some way was interwoven with his fate."

I sought to divert her thoughts.

"How is Frank Bloomer, Imy?" She turned from me suddenly, but I caught her arms, and peered down into her face. Such a pout, and a blush, and a bright, lightning glance! Their two hearts, at least, knew no cloud nor storm.

We drove up to the house. There were lights in one of the lower rooms. As we dismounted, my father came to the door. He spoke a brief word, and led us in.

Harold was there, seated in a big chair, tossing and restless. His face was haggard, and his hair hung thick and wildly over his brow. His collar was loosened, and his white, thin throat was revealed.

A lady, dressed in deep black, was upon the floor at his side as I entered. She started up, quickly, as the door opened, and hastily retreated from the room by another way.

"Why does Grace leave us?" said my father.

"Grace! Grace!" exclaimed I, standing suddenly still, and staring around the room in utter astonishment and bewilderment. Harold caught the words and started up, fixing his sharp, keen eyes upon me.

"Why, it is Mark, Mark Harlow," exclaimed he, "come here, Mark."

I went up to him, and took his hand. It was very thin, and transparent. I looked into his face—into his eyes, and, bending down, involuntary tears sprang up and fell upon his hands. Oh, what sadder sight could the world afford than this? Poor, poor Harold! So terribly doomed, so sinking beneath this dark calamity—his youth, his high soul, his fine nature, his many grand qualities of heart—blasted all by this strange, insidious poison! Terrible dispensation—calamity can take no shape, misfortune can come in no form, so utterly fearful and full of horror as this!

"He's dead, they say!" exclaimed Harold, after a moment's pause, while he watched my bowed emotion in silence, "and the river sings the louder for it. It runs over him—I know it does—so it will over me. But I tell you, Mark, you were a foolish fellow when you ran away. How like an angel, Mark! The brightest being—and she made me happy. Grace! Grace! Where is she?"

"In a moment, Harold," said my father, quietly.

"She will come soon, won't she? I can't live without her, Mark. Father! father! let me come, too—down with you beneath the river—down, down, down! Grace, why don't she come? Grace! Grace!"

"Let me withdraw, sir," said I to my father, "so that Grace may come to him."

"It is very late. We had better all separate. Harold will sleep soon, if quiet."

My father accompanied me to my room.

"Let me see you early in the morning, Mark. You have been rash and foolish—but let me see you very early. I have much to tell you."

"To night, sir"——

"Not to-night," and my father withdrew.

I flung myself upon the bed, but could not sleep. There was some perplexing mystery about matters here, which tormented me—into which I could get no clue. For hours I lay tossing upon the bed, trying in vain to solve it, or build up some satisfactory explanation of it, but turn it in what light I would, I could make nothing of it. There was but this to do—await until the morrow, with what patience I could.

All feelings of jealousy were crushed out of me by Harold's deplorable state. Sympathy for him overruled every other feeling. And yet when I thought of Grace, kneeling at his side, fleeing at my approach—her name hanging so fondly upon his lips—a connexion between them, so evidently fond and endearing, whatever it was—and recalled what I was once to her, and she to me—a cold sweat broke out upon my brow, and pangs sharp and keen pierced my heart.

I dropped into slumber at last, and slept long into the morning.

It was so late when I descended from my room, that I was obliged to breakfast alone.

"Where is Miss Ellington?" I asked of Jack, who stood behind my chair.

"She rode out before breakfast, sir."

"Which way?"

"To Dr. Ellington's, I think, sir."

"And Harold, and my sister?"

"Walking by the river, sir."

I got up and went to the window. Down by the river bank was Harold and Imy together. There was a boat drawn up on the grass. Harold in a fitful, sportive vein, was attempting to push it into the stream.

I returned to the table, and after finishing my meal, went to find my father. He was in his library.

"Sit down, Mark," said he, "and tell me something about your town experiences."

"I would rather defer that subject, sir."

"Why, sir?"

"I came to converse with you upon the subject to which you alluded last night."

"Do you mean the cause of your sudden run to town?"

"Is that the subject, sir? If so, you will pardon me, if I say it is one too painful for me to discuss."

"And if I show you," said my father, turning to me sternly, "that by harsh, dishonorable, and unmanly conduct, you wounded cruelly the heart of a true girl; that you proved yourself unworthy her noble nature; that by mean suspicion you injured her in a way which no woman can forgive or forget, perhaps, sir, the painfulness of the discussion may prove an advantageous medicine to your inconsiderate and overgrown egotism."

I looked down upon the floor and did not speak.

"That you had a right to an explanation as to the meaning of Grace's sudden-formed fondness for Harold—you see I know all about it—I admit, and an explanation would have been afforded, had you exhibited a better spirit. Even as it is, it was only by my command that some one of the household did not send such an explanation after you to town. But I thought the lesson too important a one to be rendered ineffectual by too brief a punishment."

"This is very severe, sir."

"I am not disposed to be lenient, I confess. Be as severe as I can, it is impossible for you to experience the pangs you so recklessly inflicted."

"I have suffered much, I am sure"—

"But you were guilty—and she, who was innocent, suffered the most, I'll be bound. But I have done with recrimination. I have a strange story to unfold to you, Mark."

A cry, as of agony, from the direction of the river, startled us. My father paused, and turned with an anxious look towards the window. We listened breathlessly, without speaking or stirring for a moment, when the cry was repeated, this time fainter and more remote. I sprang to the window and threw it open. It looked out towards the river. Old Jack was staggering up the bank, speechless, and weak with terror, throwing his arms wildly about in the air. His cheek was deadly pale, as I could see, even at the distance we were apart. I turned from the window.

"For heaven's sake, what can it mean?" cried my father.

"I don't know, sir," I exclaimed, rushing to the door, my mind instantly reverting to Harold and the boat upon the shore.

I reached the piazza, followed close by my father, just as Jack came up.

"Oh, sir, sir," he exclaimed, having now found his voice, "Master Harold, Miss Imy—they will drown!—they will drown!

"Where?" I shrieked, while I felt the blood rush in a tumult to my heart.

"In the boat—down the river!"

I flew down the bank a little way, but could see nothing of them.

"My horse—my horse," was all I could utter, as I darted rapidly to the stable. It did not take a minute to clap the bridle upon True, and without saddle, I sprang upon her back, and in an instant was dashing at her utmost speed along the river bank. True knew the old familiar voice, and the old hand, and with a neigh of pleasure, stretched out in the finest style, thinking we were on one of those old mad scampers, which once were the delight of both of us.

I saw my father, as we dashed by the house, standing upon the sward with clasped hands, and his grey hair tossed in the wind—his pale lips muttering, as if in prayer.

Away we went—but oh! how slow to my wish! Life might depend upon the delay of a second. In that frail boat, upon a river turbulent and swollen, with its strange power over Harold, what might not a wild moment effect? And those screams, too, gave a vague force to my terror—perhaps, great God! they might have been Imy's drowning cries!

On, on, on! How strange that I did not overtake them? The swift, arrowy current by my side answered the question. Suddenly, as following a bend of the river, they came in sight. The frail boat was dancing upon the foamy waves. Harold was standing erect, his head uncovered, his black locks floating like pendants in the breeze, his arms outstretched, and wild, frantic words came brokenly upon the air. Imy was crouching, terrified, in the bottom of the boat. Her arms were clasping his knees. She was desperately essaying to calm and soothe him, but the madness in him was rioting, and rising above control or guidance.

"What unspeakable folly," I cried, "could have tempted Imy into that boat with Harold!"

The boat was gliding swiftly over the current, but I gained upon it rapidly. Harold heard the approach. He turned suddenly towards me.

"Harold! Harold!" I cried out wildly, "in to shore! in to shore!"

He laughed a long, unnatural laugh, and threw up his arms.

"No, no, the river—the river!" he shouted. "Oh! it is life and peace. I have it now. It is mine!"

Imy saw me, and clasped her hands imploringly. Harold gave another laugh, and suddenly, even as I looked upon them, the boat careened by Harold's weight carelessly thrown to its side. Imy shrieked. I held my breath, while my heart fairly stood still—and then, into the rapid, dark current they both were plunged.

"On, True, on!" I shouted, and in another moment was opposite the spot where they had sunk. Nothing of them! The boat floated bottom upward. The waves glanced in the sun-light. All was still—so terribly still, that it fell upon my ear more painfully than the rudest and loudest clamor.

The current would float them rapidly down the stream, so on I urged my faithful nag. Presently I thought I saw a something—the edge of a robe upon the surface. I headed True to the stream. Many a time had I sported on her back in the river, and now the experience thus gained, was to serve me greatly. In an instant we were battling in the current. I struck the water a little below the object which had caught my eye. It took True but a moment or two to reach the centre of the stream. Down towards us came the object—it was Imy! One quick heart-bound as I saw it—then, with every sense and nerve strained to their utmost, calm, possessed—I wound one arm around True's neck, and clutched at the body as it came on. I reached it—grasped it with a desperate strength, and drew it to my side. We were now all floating down the current together. With a strength almost supernatural, I bent down and dragged the body, heavy with saturated clothing, out from the water, and up, by desperate, frantic efforts, to my horse's neck. The rest was comparatively easy. Her wet head rested against my breast. My two arms wound about her, while my fingers were clutched in True's mane for support. The reins hung loosely over the horse's neck, but I succeeded in turning her head to the shore.

At this juncture, two horsemen came galloping along the river bank. They were my father and Frank Bloomer. Frank, with a cry, half of terror, half of joy, plunged into the stream. He aided me with my precious burden to the shore.

Stretched upon the grass, we kneeling at her side, chafing her flesh, with mingled hope and dead, benumbing fear, with prayers and tears, and pale cheeks, and eager eyes, we watched the still, breathless body. At last, as the dawn breaks upon the lost, storm-beaten wanderer, came flushes and faint touches of life! Oh, moment of inexpressible and immeasurable happiness!

But Harold never rose to the surface!

The river was upon his breast. Its melody was in his ear. Beneath its heaven-mirrored surface, his poor, sad heart lay calm and at peace. So he had dreamed. So his mind, a shattered diamond, had caught strange prophetic glimmers.

CHAPTER VII.

RECONCILIATION.

Tramp, tramp, tramp! Along the gravelled walk they came slowly, heavily. Water, drops and drops along their path. Inanimation and appalling stillness lies stretched among them. With awe and tenderness they come, those who had dragged the river, bearing the body.

Into the hall, with uncovered heads. The bier strikes slightly against the wall, and the outstretched form quivers. Why does it not start? Is that a motion? No, the vibration only of a heavy footfall! Softly, slowly, whisperingly bear it in! Wet clouts hang about it. Little currents fall and course along the floor. His locks are partially exposed — dark, heavy, clinging, beaded yet with river drops.

Ah, Harold! Better, perhaps, so—but terrible fate, inscrutable destiny!

Alas! how soon father and son were united again!

They set the body down, and went their way—rough, uncouth fellows, treading softly, speaking low, with tears welling up from their full hearts.

We robed the body decently, wrung out the wet locks, fixed the limbs, and when all was done, I walked away.

I stood still in the hall, as horse's steps came clattering up to the house. Presently the door was thrown open, and Grace, dishevelled, and with wild eyes, and pale cheeks, came hurrying in. She brushed by me, unconscious of my presence, burst into the room where Harold's body lay, and with a heart-broken cry, staggered forward and fell upon it. She quivered and crouched down by its side, and stretched her arms convulsively over it; and laid her cheek upon his; and moaned; and rained bitter tears upon his brow.

I softly withdrew, and going into another room, flung myself in a chair, and covered my face with my hands.

I have not the power to describe all the emotions I experienced sitting there. I was not jealous at this exhibition of grief on the part of Grace. How could I be jealous in the face of this calamity—this wide-spread woe—how let such selfish passions rise in the still, awful atmosphere of death! I do myself the justice to say that it was a profounder emotion than jealousy that filled my breast. I felt that the old love was a dream, that I must needs crush it out of my heart—forget it—treat it like a summer blossom dead with the breath of winter—like a boyish delusion built among "the cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces" of many another fond air-built fancy, now every one a bubble and "unsubstantial pageant." I was not disposed at that moment to blame any one—not even Grace. Towards Harold my heart melted in tenderness. If his throbbing, wild, heavily-laden heart had found consolation, peace, or moments of pleasure in Grace, could I envy, to such a life as his, a few glimpses of happiness? Could I deprive him, even in thought, of the little fruit that had flourished upon his bald, blasted life?

Sitting there, with past and present both before me, subdued by the awful calamity which had fallen upon us, it seemed to me that my lost love was a dispensation of Heaven—a part of the grief which surrounded us, to be borne as other griefs are, humbly, silently, prayerfully—wherein there is no human blame or mortal responsibility—nothing but fate!

"Mark," said a voice at my elbow. I looked up. It was Frank Bloomer.

"How is Imy, now, Frank?"

"Much better, but a little wild at turns. She will not suffer seriously; so they all assure me. Oh, Mark, *you* saved her! What would I not have given to have been in your place? But, how fortunate—and so bravely, so admirably managed. You are a hero, Mark."

"Oh, thank you, Frank."

"You don't know all, do you—that it is all settled—that we are to be married next summer? I am almost ashamed to speak of my happiness, with poor Harold lying dead there; but my heart is full of thankfulness."

Frank stayed a little longer to repeat what he owed me—what a hero I was—how much he loved Imy—how when he saw her in my arms in the stream, and apparently dead, he wanted to die, too; and then he shook hands with me, with tears in his eyes; and hemmed and hawed, evidently wanting to say something about Grace, but couldn't; and, at last, went away.

Reverie came again with the silence. An hour past. Night came on. The room grew dusky, and dark shadows gathered in the corners, and behind the furniture. The stillness in the house seemed to grow more profound than ever. My very breathing disturbed it. A rustle that I made in stirring, fell upon my ear with startling loudness. Suddenly, a movement at the door caused me to turn quickly towards it. The door was open, and the light in the hall was greater than in the room. Drawn against the light in the doorway, stood the figure of Grace. Her face was in perfect shadow.

"Mark," said she, in a low, tremulous voice, "come with me."

I rose in great agitation and surprise, but without replying. She turned, and walked toward the room where Harold was lying. I followed her, mechanically, but with vague expectation. The room was lit from the west, and a mellow tinge was diffused through it from the sunset sky. It fell upon the uncovered face of Harold, strangely—like a halo. Grace went up to his head, knelt down and kissed his brow, and sobbed with deep anguish.

"Harold! Harold!" exclaimed she between her sobs, "Oh, can it be?"

I looked on her grief painfully, confused, tremblingly—with a strange agitation. Suddenly she started up, and while the tears streamed from her eyes, she stretched her arms towards me, and cried, in thrilling tones:

"Mark, Mark, he was my brother!"

I stood as one struck by a bolt from Heaven. I could not speak. The intelligence, so startling and incredible, seemed to rise up like a huge wave, and hurl itself upon me—stunning, bewildering, overwhelming every sense and feeling.

Grace stood with her arms outstretched towards me—pale, with quivering lips—weeping, and trembling.

"Grace! Grace!" I succeeded in uttering.

"Mark," she repeated, in the same thrilling way.

I felt it all, then—the wonderful truth, the bitter, unutterable shame.

Down, down, kneeling, crouching, cowering, burying my face upon his heart, hiding remorse, and shame, and penitential tears upon his breast—down, with reproaches so intense, and upbraidings so like sharp blades and hot coals, that I clutched at them as if to drag them from my heart—down, humbled into the dust, contrite and subdued, I fell by Harold's side, and at Grace's feet.

I wished to hide myself for ever; to shrink from the sight of the world; to fly where all this shame could not follow me. My crime seemed measureless and monstrous then, in that awful presence, and at that strange moment. Jealous of Harold, the saddest heart in the world, and *her* brother—jealous of Grace—I could have torn myself!

A figure knelt down by me, a hand rested upon my shoulder; the locks that had brushed my cheeks so often, fell upon them now; a hand stole into mine, and clasped it; tears were commingled—our hearts beat together—there, kneeling by Harold's side, against his dead heart, in that solemn presence—love came back again, and bound us one.

Darkness came upon us, and still we knelt—with heads upraised now, and looking tearfully in Harold's white face—set in its marble mould—and glimmering dimly through the enclosing shadows.

At last, I drew the covering over it, and led Grace away to a seat; and there, between tears and gushes of grief, I learned it all: how her mother had died very young, and her father had married again—a brilliant, fashionable woman, who drew him into a round of travel and pleasure, leaving his infant child in the charge of others; how her father's new wife, soon after marriage, gave evidences of insanity, and in a little while became utterly and hopelessly mad—an inherited frensy, which had existed in her family for generations; how scarcely had the asylum doors closed upon her for ever, when it became too evident that the child born unto them, must experience the same terrible destiny; how then Mr. Clarefield put away from him his sane, healthful child, and gave all his thought, time, and being, to the forlorn hope of restoring his son to sanity; how Harold became linked and bound unto his heart by such deep sympathy and passionate love, such a surrendering up of every thought and feeling, that for his little Grace, thrown upon strangers' sympathies, he appeared to have little heed; but how, unwilling to have her grow up with such a shadow across her path, such a sorrow lying upon her young heart, he had given instruction that the knowledge of himself and her brother should, for a time, be withheld from her; how he had travelled far and wide—to Europe to consult medical eminence—to new scenes, and new objects—whatever would seem to divert, animate his son, keep back the stealthy shadow, which still slowly and surely came on, and on! How at last, while trying the air of the South, he learned of the ripening graces and beauty of his daughter; how, then, upbraiding himself for his long neglect of one child for another, and conceiving a new hope that woman's love and sympathy might obtain that power over Harold, which nothing now could long retain, he hastened to bring brother and sister together; and how, finding that Mr. Harlow was so near a neighbor of his daughter, he came to him for his aid.

Thus brokenly and disjointedly did I learn the story. Grace had found a father and brother, to lose them, alas, how soon!

When the story was finished, I wound my arm around her waist, and led her from the room.

"Go, and rest now, dear Grace," said I, kissing her hand; "and remember this, it is better, a thousand times better for Harold, as it is."

We buried father and son together, upon a bank sloping to the river Harold loved so well. May its music fall ripplingly upon his ear for ever!

I have been married to Grace four years. I did not go to town again; neither to literature nor to law—but followed Frank's example and advice (he and Imy were married the summer following the incidents of this story), and settled down as a sturdy, steady, country worker—curious in stock and grain—a frequenter of Agricultural shows—wise in weather and crops.

OLD CHURCH BELLS.

Ring out merrily,
Loudly, cheerily,
Blithe old bells from the steeple tower.
Hopefully, fearfully,
Joyfully, tearfully,
Moveth the bride from her maiden bower.

Cloud there is none in the fair summer sky;
Sunshine flings benison down from on high;
Children sing loud, as the train moves along,
"Happy the bride that the sun shineth on"

Knell out drearily,
Measured and wearily,
Sad old bells from the steeple grey.
Priests chanting lowly;
Solemnly, slowly,
Passeth the corse from the portal to-day.

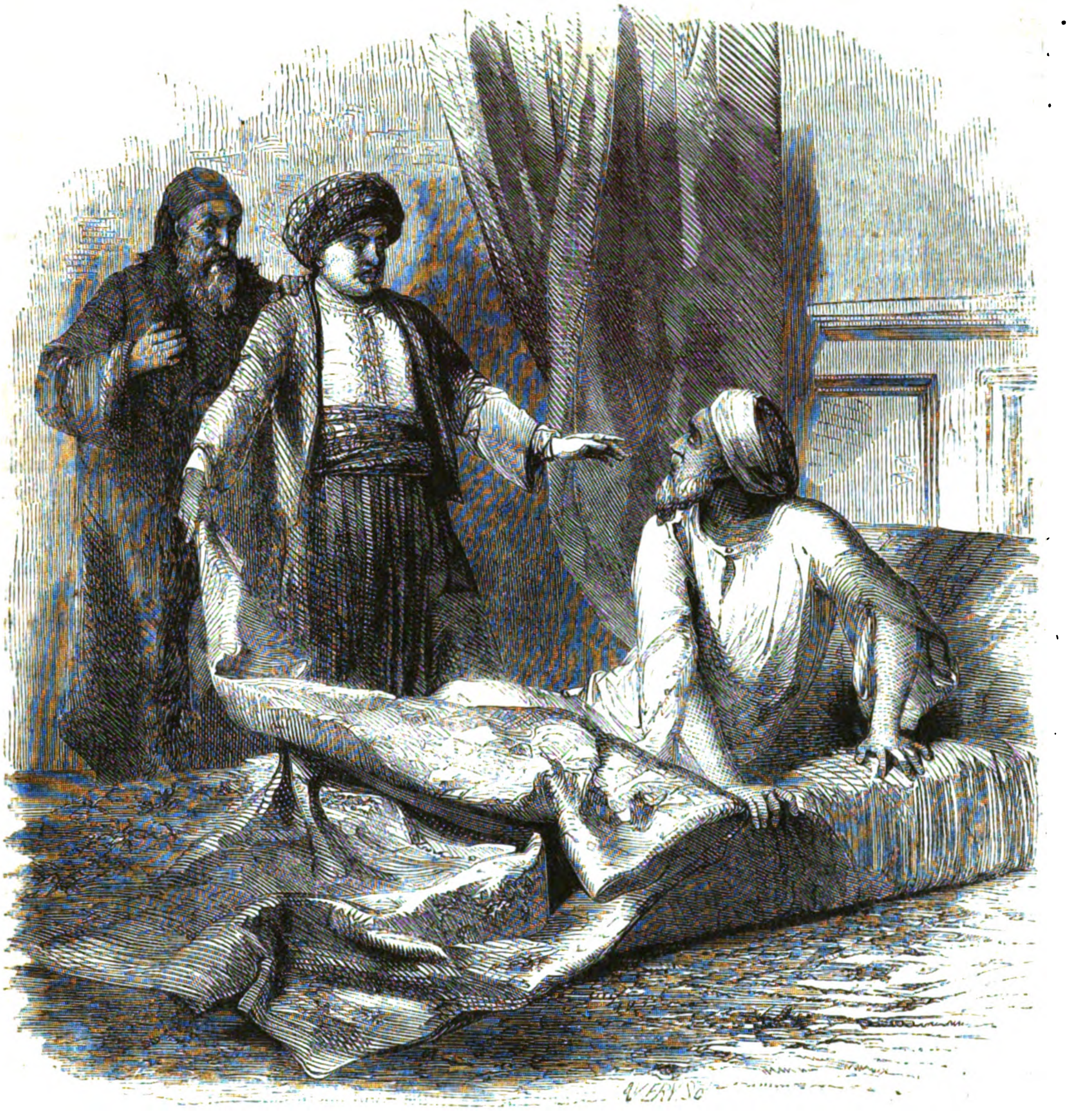
Drops from the leaden clouds heavily fall
Drippingly over the plume and the pall;
Murmur old folk, as the train moves along,
"Happy the dead that the rain raineth on."

Toll at the hour of prime,
Matin, and vesper chime,
Loved old bells from the steeple high—
Rolling, like holy waves,
Over the lowly graves,
Floating up, prayer-fraught into the sky.

Solemn the lesson your lightest notes teach;
Stern is the preaching your iron tongues preach;
Ringing in life from the bud to the bloom,
Ringing the dead to their rest in the tomb.

Peal out evermore—
Peal as ye pealed of yore,
Brave old bells, on each Sabbath day,
In sunshine and gladness,
Through clouds and through sadness,
Bridal and burial have passed away.

Tell us life's pleasures with death are still rife;
Tell us that Death ever leadeth to Life;
Life is our labor, and Death is our rest,
If happy the Living, the Dead are the blest.



DESTINY; OR, THE DREAM OF DEATH.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in thy *philosophy*."—HAMLET.

"Dreams are toys; yet for this once, yea
Superstitiously, I will be squared by this."—WINTER'S TALE.

"How now? even so quickly may one catch the plague."—TWELFTH NIGHT.

ABOUT fifteen years ago the plague raged intensely in the Levant. Among other places, the city of Smyrna suffered much from this scourge, which is known to the natives of Anadoli by the name of the Youmourjak. But heavy as the visitation undoubtedly was, Smyrna may still be considered as, perhaps, somewhat favored by Destiny, since, looking to certain Consular Bills of Mortality, the Angel of Death seems at the time in question to have passed in a more merciful mood over the meandering banks of the Meles than along the Nile in the south, or the Golden Horn in the north. Yet, as we have already declared, Smyrna suffered much, very much.

The wild and extensive flat, and low open ground—

situate to the eastward of Windmill Point—and scarcely indeed above the level of the waters of the little bay, which here, in military phrase, "turns the flank" of the north and extreme end of the sea-front of the city, became very soon after the first outburst of "La Peste" studded with the tattered and unhappy tents of the "compromised;" and, moreover, the city hospitals, especially that of St. Roque, rapidly filled to overflowing.

The Franks, ever strict believers, as a body, in the efficacy of Quarantine, shut up their trembling families in Bujah and Bournabat, and even hurriedly formed a *cordon sanitaire* round the former of those villages; while within the town of Smyrna itself, in its wide-spread network of narrow streets, almost every European merchant donned for his daily rounds an anti-contagious oilskin overcoat; and bore also in his hand a trusty and persuasive iron-shod bludgeon, to "fend off" therewith not only the dangerous approach of the reckless loose-robed Sons of the Turban, but, by St. George, to keep even the tight Sons of the Hat, even the dearest kinsmen and friends and acquaintance, at the very respectful distance of arm's length. "Touch me not" was the charitable order of the day; and "the plague is contagious," a phrase in all Christian mouths, except, perhaps, the medicos, who were of course most widely divided in their professional opinions on the subject. Dr. Bulard, a gallant Frenchman, carried the doctrine of non-contagion to such an extent as bravely to immure himself altogether with the patients in one of the Plague Hospitals, many of whom he had the ineffable satisfaction of rescuing from the very jaws of death. In Smyrna, he for some time dauntlessly stood his ground unharmed, and subsequently, on receiving *pratique*, proceeded with a like benevolent purpose to Constantinople—the city of the Sultan—where we unfortunately lost sight of him.

There is one quarter of Smyrna that is tolerably well known to travellers in the East, by the name of TURK TOWN. Here the contradictory systems and medicinal precautions of the Franks and their *Hekims* were, at the period of our story, openly held in contempt and disregarded. Here everything seemed left unreservedly to Fate, to *Takdir* or to *Kismet*. Here the Muslims, even in the Rag Bazaar, bought and sold, and ate and drank, and prayed and slept, and then prayed and bought and sold again, day after day and week after week, as if the plague were altogether a fiction, and Death had no dominion over mortal man. If any of the shops in the *tcharshees* became vacant, from their tenant being, as predestined, taken away by the terminator of delights and the separator of companions, some Alee or Omar resignedly and at once took to the very carpet, or, to be more correct perhaps, stepped into the very shoes of the dead Mustapha or Mehemet; and thus, till all trades were more than decimated, business of any kind was scarcely for a single day interrupted. Numerous fresh graves were, meanwhile, constantly being dug in the cypress-shaded cemeteries, and the hired reciters of the Koran seemed, to most observers, more than usually active, as well as hoarse and husky in their vocation; yet, notwithstanding these speaking signs, and the frequent loss of many familiar faces in every public haunt and favorite resort, there was still no panic, save, as we have already said, among the Franks.

To use a common English phrase, no one, looking merely at the conduct of the Turks, would have *dreamt* that the plague was at work within the city of Smyrna. *Dreamt*, do we say?

Aye; we are dreamers all in some sense; still few have yet dreamt as Selim of Smyrna is recorded to have done at this sad period of the plague. Listen! Bismillah! Selim, the slipper-seller, tenanted a shop or *dukian* in the Papoudj Bazaar, and possessed a private residence in Turk Town, at the top of the steep hill in the vicinity of the Jews' cemetery.

When seated one morning in the bazaar, with his tempting wares around him, his immediate neighbor, Murad, observed that his friend's countenance was, contrary to its usual appearance for years past, excessively sad, and his heart evidently contracted. He remembered, also, at the same moment, that for some days Selim had been frequently absent from his *dukian*, and had, before going away, unaccountably neglected more than once to throw the protective net over his unwatched goods. And *his* stock of red, white, yellow, blue, and black *papoudjes* was by no means the least valuable in the bazaar, one indeed offering great temptation to the dishonest. So, shifting his own position a little more to the front, and there comfortably recrossing his legs, Murad slowly turned his turbaned head far enough to bring his single grey eye—for Murad had lost the other by ophthalmia—to bear full upon the countenance and uncombed beard of Selim.

"*Bana-bak!* look here," cried Murad; upon which Selim raised his head, and ceased counting the beads of the *tesbih* or rosary he happened at the moment to be passing through his feverish fingers.

"Trade is bad this morning, O Selim; these unsainted Franks are becoming either poor or miserly. They buy not slippers as they were wont to do. May the soles of their feet be blistered, and——"

"*Yavash, yavash!*" interrupted Selim. "Be mild, O Murad! The sons of the Franks are not misers; they are at times good customers, but now their livers are all dried up with fear, as mine own is with sorrow."

"*Allah Kerim!* God is compassionate!" cried Murad. "Why should the infidels fear?"

"Fear *you* not God? *Allahden Korkmaemisen?* Yes, yes, Murad, I know you fear Allah. And the Franks——"

"The Franks," said Murad, "fear *death*. They desert our bazaars. They fly to their villages. They say leather is 'susceptible.' Can the plague, then, be hid in a slipper? *Bosh!* What foolish word is this now so often on their tongues—'*Oulashma, oulashma.*' 'Contagion, contagion.' *Allah Kerim!* God is compassionate. And the Franks, I repeat, are becoming either cowardly or miserly."

Selim shook his head, for he had many friends among the Franks.

"The plague *is* among us," resumed Murad; "but God is great! You are alive, and I am alive, and, by the Beard of the Prophet, in the whole bazaar, even in two moons, not a dozen *papoudjees* have departed for the Garden of Paradise."

"The next *papoudjee*, O Murad," said Selim, impressively, "will certainly be the friend who now addresses you."

"What words are these?" cried the astonished Murad; "why should *you* die? And how can the decree of Fate be known to you?"

"I feel that I shall very soon die," rejoined Selim; "and I will presently convey to you the grounds of my presentiment. But I fear not death."

"As the Franks *do*," murmured Murad.

"*Some* of them may fear it much; certainly, many of their livers are dried up with apprehension; but is there not a cause? Perhaps, they fear death here, since their sons, and their daughters, and their wives are distant, even a thousand leagues from their own nation and their early home."

"Never mind the Franks," ejaculated Murad, "I like them not, for they slew my two brothers at Navarin. But tell me, O Selim, why *you* should be the next to ascend to the odors of Paradise? What thing is this? What thoughts are these? Is your head a *Karpouz*, a brainless water-melon? *Shadbash!* cheer up! why should you die?"

"It is my destiny," answered Selim, "and I bow to fate: I have had a *doush*, a dream."

"From the decree of destiny there is no escape," replied Murad, "and the Prophet has declared that dreams are true omens."

"And *my* dream I will now relate to you," returned Selim.

The single grey eye of Murad twinkled in its socket, but his tongue remained silent.

"You have heard," resumed Selim, "that the *Khanum*" (thus he referred to his wife), "together with her infant, died last week of the Plague—Allah's will be done. Well, my whole household, the *Khanum* and myself included, consisted but of seven souls. Some thirteen nights ago, I dreamt that Azrael came to my abode, and that exactly seven dead bodies were carried out of my house, each covered with a red pall, and I suddenly awoke in terror and tribulation. There were as I have said, but just seven souls under my roof."

"Of whom you have lost two," interrupted Murad. "God is compassionate, and the rest may be spared to you."

"No;" continued Selim, mournfully, "the dream is already almost literally fulfilled. Six, six, *have* already been taken by the Plague. *I am the seventh!*"

Murad's face lengthened with astonishment, and great was his anxiety for his friend.

"I related my dream this morning to Aziz, our opposite neighbor, who is now angrily addressing that ill-looking Arab, seemingly half asleep on the *mastabah* before the shop, and obstructing the approach of customers. I have now told *you*, O Murad, and"——

Murad was about to make some observation, but Selim interrupted him.

"With your permission," continued he, "let me first finish my narration. I thought at one time, yesterday, of purchasing a black slave or two at the market just behind this *tcharshee;* so that by thus adding to the number of my household, the seventh death might perchance fall upon a slave, and not upon myself."

"Destiny is not to be defeated by a dodge," exclaimed Murad; "but still, the dream may not be literally fulfilled. You may yet escape. You may have, indeed, mistaken the number; seven for six. Remember, O Selim! it once pleased Allah to try Eyoub. The blow that has fallen upon you is heavy. But you are yet alive, God is all-powerful. Like Eyoub, you may flourish again. *Shadbash*, cheer up!"

"I expect nothing but speedy death," replied Selim; "I have locked up my house, and strolling down to the bazaar, through the force of habit, I find myself here, I know not how or why, for my heart is indeed contracted, and I have no desire to buy or sell."

Murad rejoined not, but allowed his friend to proceed undisturbed.

"I feel, that to buy a slave," resumed Selim, after a pause, "is wrong and cruel, and I yield not to the temptation."

"Are you *quite* alone in your house?" inquired Murad.

"I am," answered Selim; "and shall remain so, trusting in Allah, whether I am to live or expire. But if, O Murad, I am to die, I feel I *may* do so even this very night. And I know that beyond a day or two there is no escape for me."

"*Bakkaloum!*" ejaculated Murad. "We shall see. What is written, is written."

"Therefore, I conjure you, by Allah," continued Selim, "that you, and Aziz, and Atib, the little tailor, visit my house about the time of the first prayer to-morrow morning."

"To-morrow?" interrupted Murad, inquiringly.

"Yes, to-morrow," repeated Selim. "And the next morning, and the following morning also, if necessary. Rattle the door-ring once or twice, and, if I answer not, break your way in, that it may be discovered whether I be then alive or dead. If the latter, then, O Murad, you must see that I am properly washed and buried; for oh, my friend, I am now alone—alone—alone. I have no household to perform the last office."

Here, notwithstanding that resignation to the decree of Providence, for which the Osmanlees are, with justice, so celebrated, a few burning tears coursed down the cheeks of Selim. At this moment, Aziz, winding up a few hearty curses with the insulting word "Pezavenk," drove away the Arab from his *mastabah*, as one of his well-known customers, a portly *Bin-bashee*, or infantry colonel, was pompously approaching, apparently to make a purchase; and then Murad, after throwing a casual glance at the retreating, yawning son of Ishmael, spake the following words of comfort to Selim:

"I will not fail, O my friend, to render you the service you require, and I will take care that Atib and Aziz accompany me."

"Such services will ensure recompense in heaven!" said Selim.

"My duty to a fellow Muslim, and especially to one of my own *esmaf*, must not be neglected," replied Murad. "The reward is with Allah."

"I have bought my grave-clothes," continued Selim; "you will find them in a box in the wardrobe of the room in which I sleep."

Some further conversation occurred between the two friends, and then Selim rose and said, "I must now speak to Aziz, as the *Bin-bashee* has left him; and call also on Atib, the tailor. By the holy mantle of Mouhammad, Atib is the only man in the city to whom —even for a *para*—I am a *bordjlu*, a debtor."

"Then fortunate is your star," exclaimed Murad.

"I must pay Atib to-day," resumed Selim, "that no reflection may be cast on my memory. Atib is an honest man, and with him I shall also deposit my *vasiiet*, my will, which, but for the blood-relationship between us, I should have confided to thee, O Murad."

And here, Selim, taking leave, fastened up his shop and departed. Murad remained in the bazaar, but, for this day, the Franks certainly deserved the bad character given to them by the one-eyed papoudjee. They bought no slippers.

A few hours passed away, and about sunset Selim attended prayers at an adjacent mosque, and then entered his now solitary abode in Turk Town. No cheering sound greeted his approach, the *Khanum* and her prattling children were now alike in the cold grave, and the poor Osmanlee's heart, though nearly bursting, still prompted him to bow, without repining, to the will of Allah.

Slowly he passed on to his chamber, where, taking a mattress from the cupboard or *youk* in which it was kept, he spread it on the floor, carefully placed thereon the necessary bed-clothes, and then sank down, not to sleep, but to meet his apparently inevitable fate.

The night wore on—the agitated mind of Selim instinctively surveyed his past life—the follies in the warm blood of inexperienced youth committed—the opportunities for charity even recently neglected—the hasty words of anger from time to time addressed to his slaves—the lukewarm zeal with which he had occasionally befriended the stranger—the now clearly apparent selfishness that often unwittingly had actuated his motives—all, all passed before "the mind's eye" of Selim rapidly, distinctly, and forcibly; heart, and head, and memory, seemed to acquire supernatural powers of recollection—and many, therefore, were the prayers for pardon that now passed the lips of the self-accusing Mussulman.

And yet, Selim—compared with his fellows—was *not* a bad man. Let us proceed.

At midnight the young moon threw but a faint light upon the city, and indefinable shadows played along the walls of Selim's *oda*. The poor fellow had for hours momentarily expected his dissolution, that "sudden wrench from all we know." At last he happened to turn his eyes towards the door-curtain, and near to this he fancied *he perceived a tall figure, sternly regarding him!* It was so. This horrid reality froze his very life-blood.

In a few moments the figure glided nearer to the bed. Selim started up in an agony of terror. "WHO ART THOU?" were the only words he could utter, and a cold sweat burst forth on his brow.

"Be silent!" slowly exclaimed a hollow voice. "I AM AZRAEL, THE ANGEL OF DEATH!"

"My destiny is then fulfilled!" murmured Selim, his knees knocking together, and his teeth chattering. Yet, in this dreadful moment, the lessons of the Moullah did not depart from him. He religiously pronounced the Muslim profession of faith. "I testify there is no Deity but Allah; and that Mouhammad is God's Apostle. To God we belong, and to God we must return." Having made this profession, Selim sunk into a swoon.

On partially recovering his senses, and now feeling certain he was about to die, he hastily pulled the wadded quilt over his head, expecting every moment to be his last, and every echo of the wind to be the footstep of Azrael.

Some time elapsed, yet Selim still lived, though all his strength had long passed away. Why did Azrael hesitate to give the fatal blow? A thought struck Selim. Had the Angel of Death mercifully departed? But he removed not the quilt from his face, fearful to meet the gaze of the fell destroyer. Had Azrael passed on to the Hebrew *mahallé*, to slay a predestined number of heartless usurers? Had he altogether, or only for a while, left Selim? And when would he return? Oh, the agony of suspense! the indescribable horror of that dread pause in the tide of life, when at its very height of glorious flood, the sparkling stream delays for a short space that fatal turn which marks the commencing ebb, the downward, slow but certain, ever-increasing current rushing to the Sea of Death! Selim swooned again. Is he dead?

The night passed away; the day dawned; the call to the first prayer resounded from the minarets; and—— but who are these?

Several persons entered the apartment. They saw spread on the floor a bed, whereon appeared the form of a human body, motionless as a corpse, and covered with a quilt. The first was Murad, now come to redeem his promise made in the bazaar.

"The dream is indeed fulfilled," thought Murad to himself, "yet *bakkaloum*, yet let us see; we are early, 'tis scarcely day, it is possible life may not be extinct, and if I come but in time to close my poor friend's eyes, the Frankish fear of contagion shall find no imitator in Murad, the Papoudjee. Inshallah! Selim shall not be *quite* deserted in the hour of death!"

Atib, the little tailor, and Aziz now came forward, while Murad stooped down, and in a voice trembling with emotion, slowly uttered the simple word, "Selim!"

"O Azrael! O thou Angel of Death!" cried a faint voice immediately from the bed, "at length thou *art* returned! I, Selim, a true and faithful Muslim, am thoroughly resigned to my fate. Keep me no longer in suspense, but do thine office quickly. O Azrael, Azrael, as my last words, I testify there is no Deity but Allah. And I testify that Mouhammad is God's Apostle."

"'Azrael!' shouted Murad in astonishment, and jerking the quilt away from Selim's countenance, 'Azrael!' Why should you address *me* as Azrael? What am I but Murad, your friend Murad, the one-eyed Papoudjee, thanks to that cursed *remed;* Mashallah! 'tis now daybreak, open your eyes, and look up, none are around you but friends."

"I thank you, O Murad," replied Selim, gradually recognizing his friend's voice, "but by the Beard of the Prophet, AZRAEL HAS BEEN HERE THIS NIGHT."

"You have had but another dream," suggested Murad.

"No," replied Selim, now opening his eyes; "again let me acquaint you. Azrael *has* been here, Azrael *has* pronounced the dread summons, and I expect his immediate return."

Atib, the little tailor, or *terzy*, here evinced considerable uneasiness, became fidgety, and threw a furtive glance at the door-curtain, as if expecting Azrael to make his appearance forthwith from behind it.

"Selim's brain is wandering," whispered Murad to Aziz, "if Azrael has been here, how could Selim be yet alive?"

The little tailor here returned to the bed, and moving his tongue with some difficulty, owing to the fearful dryness of his mouth, ventured to ask Selim (who had again opened his eyes, but still remained prostrate), "Who else had paid him a visit during the night, or who had attended upon him?"

"*Kimsè guelmèdi!*" exclaimed Selim; "no one at all. And how could they, for the door of my house was fastened? I gave *you* permission to break in, as you doubtless have done, for if you rattled the door-ring, I heard you not."

"The door *fastened!*" exclaimed the little tailor; "'Break in!' why, we found the door *open!* We rattled no door-ring."

"To Azrael," replied Selim, "doors, perhaps, are no obstruction. Bolts and bars are but flimsy cobwebs to the Angel of Death. The door may have opened at *his* approach."

"The Moullahs know more about that than I do," continued the persevering tailor; "but pray, then, as you say no one has been up here, who is the man we saw *down* in the court-yard just now? Is he a new *Kapoudjee*, a new door-keeper?"

"I am alone in my house, I have no *Kapoudjee*," cried Selim; "but Azrael, at this early dawn, may have made himself visible to you as well as to me. O you good Muslims, I know of no man in the court; and if my door was unlatched when you entered, Azrael must himself have opened it when he this night visited me."

On hearing these words the little tailor rushed from the room.

But Selim, confident that the inevitable Azrael was about to return, resumed his prayers aloud, in which his two friends joined.

Suddenly they were startled by the return of the tailor. "By the Beard of the Prophet," exclaimed he, on rushing into the room; "the man I saw in the court, and thought to be your *Kapoudjee*, and asleep on the ground, when we passed in, *is a corpse, a corpse!*"

"A corpse!" echoed Murad and Aziz in a breath.

"Yes, a corpse," repeated the tailor; "and on turning him over, I found beneath his cloak, several things, besides this money, this bag of *beshliks*, and this dead fellow—"

"Dead! a corpse!" exclaimed the hitherto sinking and bewildered Selim. "A man dead in the court-yard!" cried he, springing upright in the bed.

"As dead as Solyman the Magnificent!" cried the sleazy little tailor, "As defunct as Hajji Bektash!"

"Then God be praised!" shouted Selim, leaping into the middle of the floor. "God be praised! as the fellow *is* dead, whoever he is, HE makes the *seventh* of my dream, and not *I*. Azrael has taken him, and not me."

But here an almost electric change came over Selim's countenance, and he, in a tremor, exclaimed: "Yet, Azrael *did* address *me!* How is this? Seven dead, and I alive. And the dream"——

In another instant Selim rushed as rapidly down to the court-yard as the little tailor had done. His three friends followed him, astounded at the strength and activity of a man but a few minutes before verging on dissolution. They found him gazing sternly at the corpse.

"The *Pezavenk!*" exclaimed Selim. I can unriddle it all. This fellow is a thief; this bag of beshliks, these other monies are mine. He has, this night, been plundering my house."

"*I* know the Pezavenk's ugly countenance," exclaimed Aziz. "This is the very Arab who was dozing on my *mastabah* in the bazaar yesterday, when the *Binbashee* arrived."

"Ah!" added Murad; "and he must then have been feigning sleep, and thus overheard Selim relate his dream to me."

"And, worse than all," rejoined Selim; "This son of a dog (may his father be burnt!) must have entered my chamber for plunder, and, seeing my state, have passed *himself* off as AZRAEL, THE ANGEL OF DEATH! What a brain I must have not to have discovered the trick."

"Well, at all events," cried the little tailor, "the dream is now out—seven were to die, and seven *are* dead. Selim is now the eighth in the house, and *Inshallah*, he will be saved."

And Selim *was* saved, and for aught we know to the contrary, yet occupies a shop in the slipper-bazaar at Smyrna.

THE UNLUCKY TRIMMER.

AN ANECDOTE OF MODERN HUNGARY.

It seems as if fortune delighted in extending her hand favorably towards some individuals, while to others she puts it forth only to deceive and buffet them through life. Her caprices have furnished us with a lively example in both manners of dealing. We relate the simple facts as we have heard them, without adding a word.

In Hungary, towards the close of 1848, war was the only theme in vogue; in Pesth, the word "peace" was quite out of fashion. The hotels were filled with guests who met for the purpose of discussing the favorite topic—martial music was heard from morning till night — the European war was preparing. Two personages were sitting together before a small table at the hotel Nagy Pipa, to whom the German saying might have been applied—"Der eine schweigt, der andere hört zu" (One keeps silence, the other listens to him); for one of these two personages seemed attentively considering the probable or possible cause of his companion's silence, casting from time to time a scrutinizing look on his countenance, intended to penetrate whatever dark project might be passing within. This observant individual was no other than the humane Master Janos, police-corporal and vice-jailer of the noble city of Pesth; and when we inform our readers that he occupied this post during Metternich's time, and that notwithstanding that minister's overthrow, he still retained his position—unlike the usual fate of the adherents of a fallen system—they will surely admit that the favorite of fortune could not be better personified than by the same Master Janos. Nor can it be denied that the individual opposite was as much persecuted by the fickle goddess as the other was favored. This was obvious, not only from the fact that he was at that moment the object of honest Master Janos's suspicious glances, but that he was in that locality at all—that a nailsmith's apprentice from Vienna had wandered into Hungary, of all places on earth—a country where the craft is carried on wholesale at the corner of every village by the Wallachian gipsies.

Master Janos had not studied Lavater; but long experience had led him to conclude, after minute examination of the man's countenance, that some counter-revolutionary scheme was turning in his head; conse- he drew his chair nearer, and proceeded to break the silence.

"Where do you come from, sir, if I may presume to ask?" he inquired, with a wily glance at his companion.

"Hyay! from Venice." sighed the stranger, looking into the bottom of his glass.

"And what news from that city?"

"Hyay! nothing good."

"Eh, what?—nothing good! What bad, then?"

"Hyay! war is feared."

"Feared! What audacity! How dare they fear?"

"Hyay! I do not fear, sir, at thirty leagues' distance; but once I heard from the cellar how they were bombarding the streets, and I found nothing very agreeable in it."

Master Janos found increased reason for suspicion; he resolved to make the man drink, expecting to come by this means upon the traces of some dangerous plot.

How much does a nailsmith's stomach require? At the second pitcher, his head sunk slowly back, and his tongue moved with difficulty. "Now for it," thought Master Janos, filling his glass. "Eljen!—liberty!" he exclaimed, waiting for the nailsmith to strike glasses. The latter was not long in responding to the invitation, and echoed the word "Eljen!" as well as his thickening tongue permitted.

"Now, it is your turn to give a toast," said the vice-jailer, eyeing his victim.

"Indeed, I am not used to give toasts, sir; I only drink them."

"Come, be social: drink to anybody you consider the greatest man in the world."

"In the whole world?" replied the nailsmith, reflecting that the world was very large, and that he knew very little about it.

"Yes in the whole world," pursued Master Janos confidently.

The nailsmith hesitated, scratched his nose, scratched his ears, scratched his whole head, and finally cried out: "Success to Master Slimak!" The vice-jailer shuddered at this public demonstration. What could Master Slimak be but some low plotting fellow? Without any further ado, he seized the nailsmith by the collar, and, escorting him to the town-hall, dragged him into a narrow, ominous-looking chamber, before a stout, red-faced gentleman.

"This man is a suspicious character," he exclaimed. "In the first place, he has the audacity to fear war; in the next, he sat from seven till half-past nine—two whole hours and a half—without opening his lips; and, finally, he was impious enough to give a public toast to a certain Master Slimak, who is probably quite as suspicious a character as himself."

"Who is this Slimak?" asked the stout, red-faced gentleman.

"Nobody indeed," said the trembling Viennese, "but my former master, an honest nailsmith, whom I served four years, and would be serving still, had his wife not beaten me."

"Impossible!" ejaculated the fat red-faced personage. "It is not customary to give public toasts to such people."

"But I don't know what the customs are here."

"If you wished to give a toast, why did you not drink to constitutional liberty, to the Upper and Lower Danube armies, or to freedom of the press?"

"Hyay, sir, I could not learn all that in a month."

"But in three months, I daresay, you will be able to learn it well enough. Master Janos, take that man into custody."

The humane Master Janos again seized the delinquent by the collar, and escorted him to the place appropriated to such malefactors, where he had time to consider *why* he was put there.

The three months passed slowly enough to the nailsmith. It was now the middle of March. Master Janos punctually released his prisoner: and the honest man determined to prove the reform in his sentiments, and thereby rise in Master Janos's opinion.

"Success to liberty and the Hungarian army!" cried he. Master Janos stumbled against the wall in speechless horror; and as soon as he recovered his equilibrium, he seized the astonished nailsmith, who, when he had regained his terrified senses, found himself again in the narrow, ominous-looking chamber; but now, instead of the stout red-faced gentleman, he stood before a lean black one, who, when he understood the charge against the prisoner, without permitting any explanation, condemned him to three months' imprisonment, informing him that henceforth, unless he wished to fare worse, he must exclaim, "Success to the imperial armies, the great constitution, and the one and powerful Austria!" And the nailsmith, having made three steps beyond his prison-door, was brought back to renew his captivity, and to ponder over his strange fate.

The three months again passed, and it was some time in June that Master Janos released his captive. The poor man, even at his prison-door, began to bawl out redeeming words. "Long live Prince Windischgratz! Success to glorious Austria!" cried he. Master Janos laid his hand upon his sword, as if to protect himself from this incorrigible man.

"What!" demanded he, "Was it not enough to imprison you twice? Have you not yet learned what to say? Step in here;" and for the third time there was the narrow chamber; but, instead of the meagre black gentleman, it was again the red-faced individual before whom our victim appeared to answer for his oft-repeated crime.

"Obstinate traitor!" he exclaimed, "are you aware of the extent of your offence; and that if I did not condemn you, as I mercifully do now, to an imprisonment of three months on my own responsibility, you must be given up to justice, and would probably be cut into four quarters, as you deserve?" The unhappy man could not do otherwise than rejoice, in his extreme terror, at the mildness of the sentence.

"What should I have said?" he asked of his lenient judge, in a voice of despair.

"What should you have said? Why, success to the republic! success to democracy! success to revolution!" The poor fellow promised faithfully to remember these things, and resigned himself patiently to the new lease granted him of his dark abode.

During the ensuing three months, everything had changed, except the good fortune of Master Janos; neither time nor chance could succeed in displacing him, as they had so many others. He was still vice-jailer of the noble city of Pesth. It was now September; the nailsmith's penalty was out, and Master Janos called him forth. The prisoner's countenance expressed something unusually important; and no sooner did the jailer approach, than, seizing his hand, he burst into tears.

"Oh, Master Janos," said he, sobbing, "tell the gentleman that I humbly kiss his hand and wish from the bottom of my heart, success to the republic!"

As the hungry wolf pounces on the lamb, so once more did Janos seize the nailsmith by the ill-used collar; and indeed so shocked was the worthy jailer, that after dragging the prisoner into the narrow, ominous-looking room, it was some time ere he could explain the circumstances to the lean black gentleman, who once more occupied the place of the fat red-faced one; and great was his surprise when the individual, instead of sentencing the delinquent to be broken on the wheel, merely awarded him three months more incarceration.

On the 3d of November 1849, all who had been imprisoned for slight political offences were released from confinement; among others, the nailsmith. As Master Janos opened the door, the unfortunate man stopped his mouth with his handkerchief, giving the humane jailer to know by this pantomime that he would henceforth keep his demonstrations to himself.

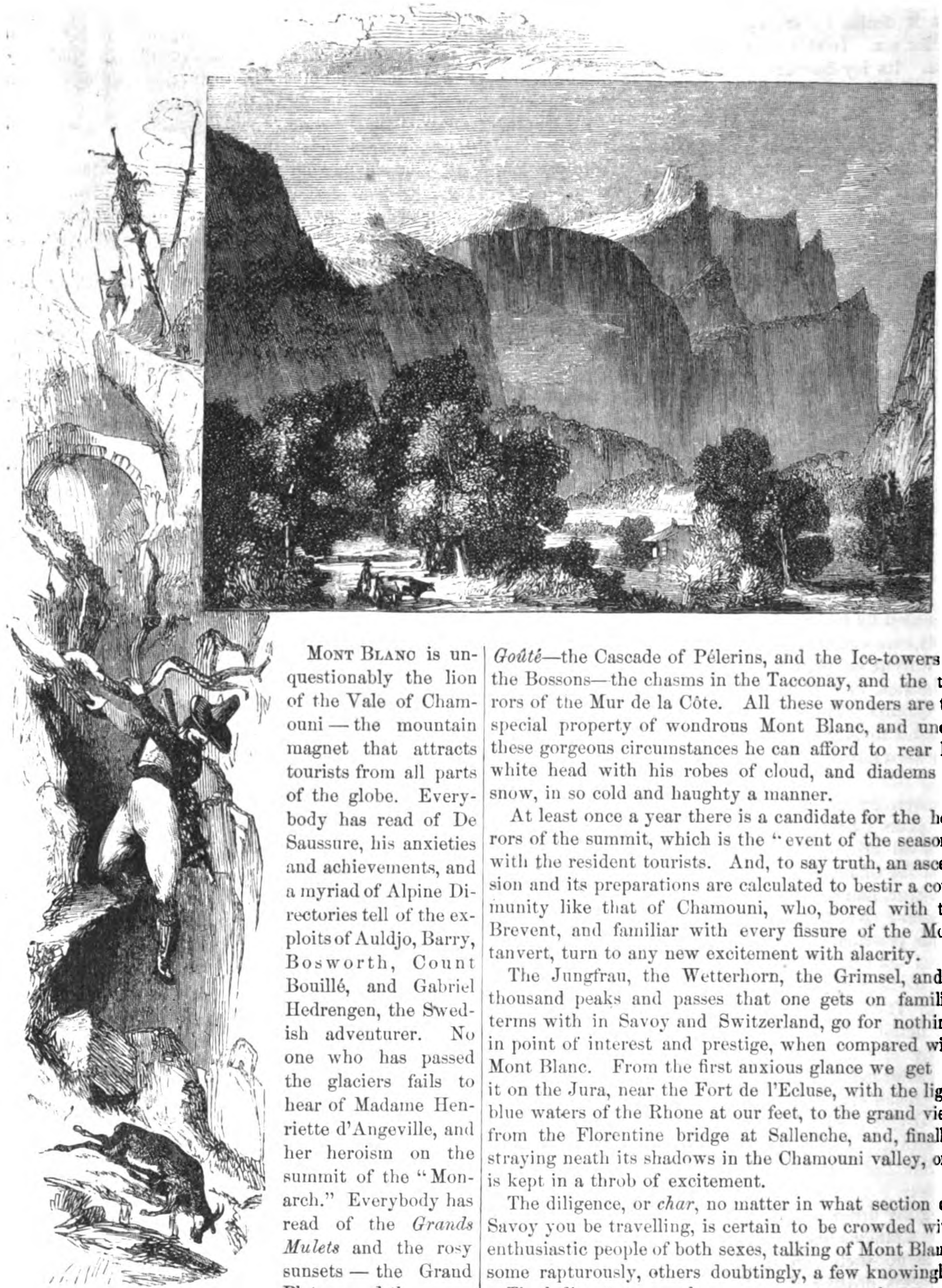
A WIFE'S PARDON.

Now that the first wild pang is past and over,
  Now I have learn'd to accept it as a truth,
That men love not as women, that the lover
  To whom the woman gives herself, her youth,
Her trust, her love, her worship—in his heart,
  Just on the surface—keeps a spot apart,

Deck'd with gay weeds, and painted flies and flowers,
  Bright to the eye, all scentless though they be:
Beneath whose flaunting blooms and shadeless bowers,
  He can receive as flaunting company;
I can forgive thee, knowing that I hold,
  Alone of all, the key of purst gold
That locks the gate beyond, whose golden trellis
  Shuts out the common herd and shuts in me,
'Mid nightingales and fountains, where a palace
  Hymen hath built, and I alone with thee
Can dwell while both shall live, supreme to reign
  The rightful queen of this my fair domain.

So, I forgive thee, husband, yes, I pardon,
  I give thee back the love I had withdrawn:
Love—ay, but not the same love, that gay garden
  With all its florid flowers, its dance-trod lawn,
Its painted butterflies, a tomb contains
  Wherein lie buried Trust's poor cold remains.

A PASSION FOR MOUNTAIN PEAKS.



Mont Blanc is unquestionably the lion of the Vale of Chamouni — the mountain magnet that attracts tourists from all parts of the globe. Everybody has read of De Saussure, his anxieties and achievements, and a myriad of Alpine Directories tell of the exploits of Auldjo, Barry, Bosworth, Count Bouillé, and Gabriel Hedrengen, the Swedish adventurer. No one who has passed the glaciers fails to hear of Madame Henriette d'Angeville, and her heroism on the summit of the "Monarch." Everybody has read of the *Grands Mulets* and the rosy sunsets — the Grand Plateau and the moonlight—the sharply-defined *Aiguilles* and the *Dome du Goûté*—the Cascade of Pélerins, and the Ice-towers of the Bossons—the chasms in the Tacconay, and the terrors of the Mur de la Côte. All these wonders are the special property of wondrous Mont Blanc, and under these gorgeous circumstances he can afford to rear his white head with his robes of cloud, and diadems of snow, in so cold and haughty a manner.

At least once a year there is a candidate for the horrors of the summit, which is the "event of the season" with the resident tourists. And, to say truth, an ascension and its preparations are calculated to bestir a community like that of Chamouni, who, bored with the Brevent, and familiar with every fissure of the Montanvert, turn to any new excitement with alacrity.

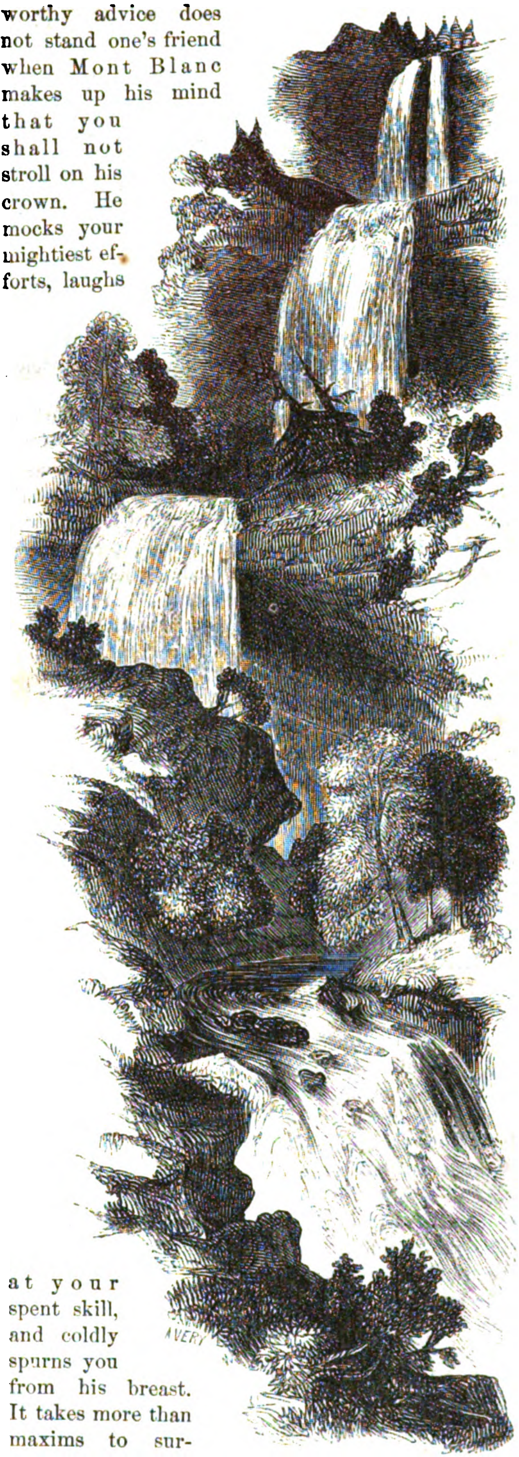
The Jungfrau, the Wetterhorn, the Grimsel, and a thousand peaks and passes that one gets on familiar terms with in Savoy and Switzerland, go for nothing, in point of interest and prestige, when compared with Mont Blanc. From the first anxious glance we get of it on the Jura, near the Fort de l'Ecluse, with the light blue waters of the Rhone at our feet, to the grand view from the Florentine bridge at Sallenche, and, finally, straying neath its shadows in the Chamouni valley, one is kept in a throb of excitement.

The diligence, or *char*, no matter in what section of Savoy you be travelling, is certain to be crowded with enthusiastic people of both sexes, talking of Mont Blanc, some rapturously, others doubtingly, a few knowingly. The ladies, too, are always very rapturous in regard to Mont Blanc. For many reasons. Some are startled by its grandeur—others have read Lord Byron's familiar lines in Childe Harold—others think its top is "so nice and white," and occasionally a languid *bas bleu* sighs that it denies its snowy crest to the footfalls of the gentler sex. In this respect Mont Blanc *is* wanting in taste. Its icy barriers are inaccessible to female feet. What a joyous task it would be to traverse those snow-paved avenues if we had ladies as guides, instead of a mob of ill-looking Savoyards. How the dangers would be assuaged, and the perils embroidered, with a female voice, low and sweet, to accompany us on the journey. Every ice-point in the sunlight would wear a richer hue. Each yawning crevice would be robbed of its fears. Desolation would become a delight.

But beyond the "Cascade of the Pilgrims," with its rainbow flood of bright water, it is almost impossible for ladies to go. They must be content to use their lorgnettes on the Brevent; to pluck slips of rhododendrons on the brown shelves of the Montanvert; to gaze at the countless cloud-wreathed pinnacles from the vale; and, with pavilion visits to the Flegere, to trace the winding waters of the Arve. The "upper grandeurs" of Mont Blanc to them must be a sealed book. Its heavenward mysteries must lie cold and silent, away from their scrutiny.

I remember meeting a lady at Ravenna who had crossed the St. Bernard on a mule (after the fashion of Napoleon le Grand), who confidently looked forward to the epoch when all mountain passes and summits would be reached by the gentle means of comfortable balloons. If this ever comes to pass, then ladies will not be excluded from enjoying the beauties of unamiable inaccessibilities, of which Mont Blanc and Himalaya are twin tyrants. The "Chamouni and Mont Blanc Incorporated Patent Steam Balloon Company" would certainly be a novelty, and—would do a *safe-paying business.*

Though by no means original in this feeling, for many years I have had a passion for mountain-peaks, and of all others that of Mont Blanc. Twice have I visited the Chamouni valley for the purpose of making the ascent, and twice failed—inglorious record as this may seem. Not that I lacked enterprise (though I say it, who perhaps should not); not that the dread of dangers subverted the desire, nor that I could not bring to bear the energy and fortitude the task requires. There are other reasons which I shall presently detail. There is a consolation in the knowledge that my failures were only two of ten thousand, for if a faithful catalogue had been maintained, they would surely reach that number. I am, therefore, not the only individual who has turned his back on the defiant peak with a vexed spirit, and then wonder why nature had shut her portals of snow directly in my face. It was clear I was not a chosen one, no matter how burning my ardor or intense my desires. Bulwer has written a famous line—"In the bright lexicon of youth there is no such word as fail," and there is a sea of apopthegms floating from lip to lip in which we are told "not to be cast down," but "try on, try ever," and "upward, onward, Excelsior!" but all this praiseworthy advice does not stand one's friend when Mont Blanc makes up his mind that you shall not stroll on his crown. He mocks your mightiest efforts, laughs at your spent skill, and coldly spurns you from his breast. It takes more than maxims to surmount a chasm, and in the matter of glaciers, a pair of hobnailed boots is worth the tersest epithets ever coined. Never go to Savoy with nothing to your back for proverbs. They will serve you only as stairs of sand.



My first essay in the Chamouni vale was early in the month of June; and having consulted the *chef* of the guides, he assured me that it was at least a month too early to make the ascent. At that time, not fully comprehending the difficulties, I pressed the matter, and at my suggestion he collected the guides, and separately questioned each as to the propriety of the undertaking. A murmur ran through the group, and with one exception, they all refused, urging that the glaciers were in too dangerous a condition at that early period of the year. A glance at the Arve afterwards convinced me of their knowledge in this respect, as that stream was swollen from the water of the glaciers, to the extent of overflowing, in many places. Ten hours after, I crossed the *Tête Noire*, with the conviction that Mont Blanc would, some other day, claim the honor of my society --and it did.

I left my card for him next, late in the month of August, when the weather was superb, and not a wreath of mist had been seen in the valley for a week. Chamouni (provoking fact), was full of company at the time, and the whole community from La Comptesse d'Anglebert, at the Hôtel Royal, to the dirty hurdy-gurdy boy at the Pélerins, predicted I should be successful.

The night before the morning I was to start, albeit I retired early for the purpose of refreshing, I did not close my eyes, or if I did, they might as well have been open. All I could do was to get up and look out of the window at the moon, and then seek my pillow again, which in no way encouraged the desire to slumber.

I arose at five, and the florid east, as far as the mountain barriers would permit the gaze to extend, gave promise of a brilliant day. Many of the guests of the Hôtel de Londres were assembled in the courtyard, to see me start, and the guides and porters (seven in number) were equipped and loaded in due form. I was attired in a coarse, warm suit of dark woollen stuff, with knapsack full of minor necessities, in the way of socks, veils, spectacles (a protection against the glare of the sun on the ice), and little bars of chocolate. A mule, elaborately caparisoned by my favorite guide, stood at the door, on which I was to ride as far as the Pélerins. A hasty breakfast in the *salle à manger*, a stupendous shaking of hands, a few glances of bright eyes from the lattices overlooking the courtyard, the bustle and confusion among the porters, the division of the knapsacks and lanterns, with three loud cheers from the assembled lookers-on—these matters settled and enacted, off I went on my mule, with the guides leading the way, and the porters and a lot of their rabble-compatriots bringing up the rear in a very picturesque manner.

For two hours we toiled through a copse of pine and shrubs up a rugged path, avoiding the ravine and torrent on the left, and occasionally having glimpses of the ice-turret of the Glacier des Bossons on the right, as the path assumed a hasty elevation in its course. I was the only one of the party mounted, but my animal, in its steep, zigzag progress, threw me into so many painful attitudes, that I was truly delighted when I got to my feet at the Châlet de la Para, on the arid hill-side.

The Châlet was quite deserted, and looked very bleak and crazy, but the guides insisted on refreshing here, and produced their flasks of Cognac and vin ordinaire, throwing down the knapsacks and staffs.

On quitting the châlet, after partaking of the refreshments, the ground grew at every step more desolate and arid, and, with the exception of a clump of rhododendron here and there, struggling with the sharp air for existence, there was nothing to be seen but fragments of rock, and the coarse stones left in the descent of avalanches. We found the famous Pierre Pointue nothing more than a great mass of granite Here I consulted my thermometer, and it stood at thirty-three degrees—just above the freezing point—but, the exertion being excessive, we did not observe the change of temperature. We were now traversing the huge buttress of the Aiguille du Midi, which was somewhat dangerous, great rocks rearing their broad fronts on the left, and the right looking over the precipice down to the *moraine* of the vast glacier. The view that here presented itself was very impressive; but, as the precipice is steep, and the route narrow and uncertain, I found it better to keep my eyes ahead, and not permit them to wander over the craggy grandeurs of the glacier. A false step might have had a fatal termination.

Another half-hour, after crossing a troublesome collection of stray boulders, and we reached what the guides termed the Pierre à l'Echelle, where we found a ladder in tolerable repair, and an old knapsack, full of short billets of wood, which had evidently been left by some former pilgrim. Jean told me that a ladder is constantly kept here, to assist travellers in crossing crevices, and I found its service was most important, after getting into the glacier.

It was still twenty minutes' walk to the border of the ice, which we reached without difficulty. We had here a fine view of the Montagne de la Côte, on which the celebrated de Saussure, the pioneer of this hazardous route, proceeded, on his ascent in 1787. Beneath us the valley sloped away, and its châlets and sloping pasturages looked like a confused and chequered surface far in the distance. The pine forests on the mountains looked like a sere livery, while many of the chain of peaks, rising behind the village, stood out bold and lofty, their summits tipped with white. Above us vast ridges of snow rose on all sides, and through them we could distinguish colossal masses of glittering ice, that looked as if they had been split and torn asunder by the fury of a tempest. Looking up the glacier, jutting pinnacles and frosted crags fiercely broke the gaze. These glistened in the sunlight, so that we could scarcely look at them. The shattered surface of the two ridges shutting in the channel we were about to traverse, presented ledges of ice of inconceivable magnitude. Had we been nearer to them, our wonder would have been still more excited, as the vastness of the view, and the impossibility to calculate distance, destroys all idea of proportionate bulk.

Jean Carrier now went ahead on the glacier, and, the snow being firm, we found no difficulty in proceeding while we kept in each other's track. We all put on glasses and veils, and found them extremely useful in protecting our eyes from the dazzling shimmer of the sun on the ice. As we advanced, we found the way less practicable, and frequently encountered chasms of terrific width, which caused us to make détours of several hundred yards. The upper part of the glacier, as seen from the valley, presents no remarkable features beyond that of a score of glaciers met with in Switzerland; but, when on it, how startling the impression! A million ice-crags, rent and torn asunder in the most grotesque shapes, and scattered on all sides, form a scene of the most splendid and overwhelming character.

We found it necessary, as a mutual protection, to tie ourselves together with cords, and step with extreme caution. The fissures were every moment growing more numerous, and small walls of ice had to be clambered by means of footholds cut with a hatchet by Jean, who displayed wonderful nerve and skill in his operations. Several of these walls or arches were steep and narrow, and after two of the guides had reached the top, the rest of us were half-drawn up, assisting ourselves as best we could, by clinging like flies to the footholds. I stood more in awe of treacherous paths across the crevices than any other of the various dangers, as a single block of the path giving way, the whole would slide, and we should be hurled mercilessly down a chasm of unknown depth. I was truly glad when we began the ascent of the Grands Mulets, the lofty rocks that rise from the desert of ice at the extremity of the glacier we had just toiled over.

We scrambled on to these rocks with no little trouble, and immediately set about arranging the knapsacks and contents, which had been violently knocked about by our troubles on the glacier. Jean arranged a sort of tent for me on a platform of rock, with batons and a couple of blankets, that looked excessively inviting, considering we were two thousand feet above the line of eternal frost. It was not the cold, though, that had annoyed us after we had changed our garments, but the fierce heat of the burning sun striking on the cornices of the rock. The tent so kindly thought of served as a protection against its rays; and, after covering the surface of the ledge with two or three knapsacks, and blankets over these, I managed to assume a lounging position, and rest from the fatigue just undergone.

Our bivouac on the cone-like rocks presented a wild and singular aspect. We seemed to be wrecked on a great barque of rock in an immense ocean of tempest-driven ice, desolate, and lost, beyond human reach. This was merely a thought, however, for here we were out of the way of the avalanches, and in no danger of slipping down crevices. The only thing we had to look out for was not to go too near the edge of the parapets and slip off, but this only wanted an exercise of ordinary caution.

The novelty of our position, the pure air, and the favorable situation for rest, all combined to put us in good spirits. When the sun shifted his beams from my ledge we prepared dinner—fashionable hour, it being about five—and all fell to in earnest.

It was arranged that we should quit the Mulets, and start for the Grand Plateau as soon as the moon arose, but it seems we reckoned without our host. During our banquet a mass of clouds appeared in the south-east, and gradually spread around the loftiest summits, including the *calotte* of Mont Blanc. Jean seemed to be uneasy at this, and stood, with his arms folded, gazing above, as if something important was passing in his mind. At length he clambered over to my tent, and, with a serious air, communicated the unpleasant conviction that he believed the weather was suddenly going to change. The very thought palled me for the moment, as I knew it would be impossible to ascend La Côte if there was a cloud in that quarter. I suggested it might possibly clear up before midnight. He shook his head doubtingly, but promised to wait. After passing, securely, one of the most difficult portions of the journey, this was indeed dispiriting, and I anxiously watched my barometer with the hope of detecting a favorable alteration in the glass.

The clouds, instead of disappearing, slowly thickened, and by midnight all around was dense, dark, and threatening. The guides held a consultation, and determined that an attempt to proceed would be rash, with the weather wearing an unsettled prospect. Jean added that we had better descend to the valley early in the morning, or we might suffer from what seemed to be an approaching storm. With all my anxiety to accomplish the ascent I could offer no objections, feeling convinced that he based his advice on an experience and sagacity which I had not.

The sunset glories seen from these rocks have been so often vividly detailed by able writers that I will not attempt to describe what I saw. A feeble pen like mine could never do justice to the gorgeous scenes that passed around and above me. I remember them as a magnificent dream, wild, splendid, and inconceivable! I was spell-bound and entranced by the changing glories that hovered like fairy visions on every side. It was an atmospheric romance; soft, transparent, changing, and beautiful, beyond human comprehension. I trembled with rapture as I watched those wondrous effects; and when they passed away, it was as if I had awakened from a strange unearthly vision, the memory of which filled me with emotions I could not comprehend.

After the resolve to remain at the Mulets all night, the guides arranged themselves about the ledges of the rocks as best they could, and soon were wrapped in slumber. Jean sought my tent, and was also quickly asleep, and I alone kept watch in the dreary ice-bound solitude. It was fearfully impressive, with not a star to be seen, nor light, except the dim cold reflection from the ice of the glaciers that lay silently beneath. The clouds above still thickened, and gloom, black, and impenetrable, hung over us like a canopy of evil.

* * * * * *

At last the morning dawned. It was raw, chilly, and uncomfortable. The clouds were still overhanging the high peaks, and we prepared to descend. The guides attacked the remainder of the provisions, and once more assumed the packs, now well-nigh emptied of their contents. I was so stiff and paralyzed by the cold, and regretful of the necessity of returning, that I could partake of nothing but a cup of chocolate. The men seemed to regard the whole affair as a "matter of course," and uttered nothing in complaint beyond a few idle remarks, which in no way tended to soothe my disappointment. In twenty minutes after bidding adieu to the rocks, the descent of which required some caution, we were full upon the glacier.

The re-passage of this vast ice-field was marked by no incidents of importance. It was the same toilsome undertaking as before. With all my desire to attain the summit, I felt that the myriad anxieties, labor, oppression, and danger, overbalanced the solitary glory of standing on the crown of the Monarch. I was contented in the knowledge that I was once more alive, and on a soil unencompassed with danger. I reached Chamouni in a deplorable state of exhaustion, where every comfort was prepared for my reception. I sought my bed with a weary, intense disgust of everything in the shape of mountains and glaciers. I was literally worn out. Just as I was settling my jaded faculties into slumber, Jean rattled at my door to say that a furious flood of rain was dashing over our recent path. We had escaped it. I remember I attempted to utter a sentiment of thankfulness, but the effort died on my lips. I was asleep.

DROPPING LEAVES.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

The leaves are dropping, dropping,
And I watch them as they go;
Now whirling, floating, stopping,
With a look of noiseless woe.
Yes, I watch them in their falling,
As they tremble from the stem,
With a stillness so appalling—
And my heart goes down with them!

Yes, I see them floating round me,
'Mid the beating of the rain,
Like the hopes that still have bound me,
To the fading past again.
They are floating through the stillness,
They are given to the storm—
And they tremble off like phantoms
Of a joy that has no form.

But the proud tree stands up prouder,
While its branches cast their leaves—
And the cold wind whispers louder,
Like a sobbing breath that grieves:
A heart that's long in breaking,
As a single leaf may cling,
Sere, sapless, brown, and quaking—
On the naked bough till spring.

Then I thought that tree is human,
And its boughs are human too;
For while the leaves were wealthy
With kindling sap and dew—
While the sun shot golden lances
Through all its billowy green,
And the birds poured love and music,
Where the slanting rays had been—
Then its great roots gather'd fragrance,
Like wine-drops from the ground,
Till it sparkled through the foliage,
As faith fills the profound
Of souls that live together,
In kindred trust and love—
Till their union seems immortal,
As the burning stars above.

But the very dews of summer,
Had left their own decay—
And change, a ruthless vampire,
That steals the soul away,
Came with the mellow autumn,
And touched those leaves with blight;
Then the frost came stealing earthward,
Like a ghost upon the night.

Then I thought those leaves were weary,
And thrill'd with human pain,
As they fell so cold and dreary
Beneath the beating rain.
While the boughs waved slow and grimly,
And shook them all away—
Those leaves that fell so dimly,
Like shadows on the day!

Then my soul went sadly after,
As they quivered from my sight,
And it followed faster, faster,
As my hopes had taken flight.
So I watched the pale leaves flutter,
Flutter downward from the stem—
And I said, the cold earth under
Is enough for me and them.

A FRENCH SOLDIER'S ADVENTURE.

We were all in the highest spirits as, with drums beating and colors flying, we marched out of Bayonne on the road to Spain. The majority of my comrades were as new as I was to the trade of a soldier, having only just become liable to that devouring conscription which in those days swept off the whole youth of the nation before it had reached to maturity. Few of us, therefore, had had any experience of the innumerable hardships of all kinds which we should have to endure before we should again see *la belle France*, even supposing that we should be so favored as to escape with life from the swords and bullets of the enemy.

As none of my comrades play a prominent part in my story, I need not describe them farther than by saying that they were generally brave and good-tempered, and that the utmost good-will and harmony prevailed throughout the regiment. Indeed, officers and men were upon the best possible terms, with one exception, namely, that of the colonel, who was the only unpopular man amongst us. Not that he was a harsh martinet, harassing and worrying his men unnecessarily, but we knew that he had no pretensions to the character of a good soldier; and his cold, haughty manner was but ill calculated to claim affection and confidence. But, even if his professional abilities and his manner had been ever so commendable and agreeable, he would have found it a hard matter to make himself a favorite with us. The revolutionary hatred of the upper classes had not yet burned out, and the colonel was considered an aristocrat—a title which, right or wrong, was quite sufficient to insure him the hatred of a set of young men thoroughly imbued with the spirit of these times. We were accustomed to see men, like Victor and others, rising by merit alone from the lowest ranks in the army to the most important command; and we looked with extreme jealousy on those members of the old families, whom Napoleon believed it to be good policy to conciliate, by promoting them far beyond their deserts, whenever, either from expediency or conviction, they avowed themselves partisans of the imperial régime. There was ample cause, therefore, for the unpopularity of our commanding officer. Soldiers never esteem an officer in whose ability they have no confidence: and, so far as military knowledge went, the colonel was a mere ignoramus. Add to this, that he was haughty and proud, and it is plain that he could hardly be otherwise than disliked by his men.

We played our part in several important engagements with the Spanish troops, distinguishing ourselves more by our fearlessness and zeal than by our discipline; and, after some time, were marched to the rear during a lull in the storm of war, in order that we might recruit our strength, now terribly weakened by sickness and the sword. It had been my good fortune to find occasion of distinguishing myself more than once, and so, before I had been a year and a half on active service, I had exchanged my musket for the darling object of every poor conscript's ambition in France—an epaulet; a reward which I considered far more than repaid me for all that I had suffered since leaving my happy home.

It is necessary that I should describe somewhat particularly the place in which we were to pass some few weeks, in order to get ourselves again in a fit condition to face the enemy. At little more than a quarter of a league from the picturesque old town which we were to occupy, was situated a large convent, strongly built of stone, and admirably adapted, as nearly all the convents and monasteries of the Spanish peninsula were found to be, for temporary defence. About half our number found accommodation in the convent I have described; while the remainder were quartered on the inhabitants of the neighboring town. Now these worthy people, although not animated by the patriotic and devoted spirit which burned so brightly in the bosoms of the heroes and heroines of Saragossa and Gerona, were patriotic enough, like most of their countrymen, to be at best very lukewarm in their attachment to the government of his majesty King Joseph, the brother of Napoleon, then placed upon the throne. Though they might not have the spirit to rise against us in an unguarded moment themselves, it was more than probable that they would quietly allow us to be pounced upon by others; and the most that we could safely count on was, that they would remain the passive spectators of events, leaving us to provide for our safety, whatever might happen, in the best way we could. In fact, we could not expect that they would help us, either by word or deed; and as the town itself was quite open and totally incapable of defence, while numerous bands of guerrillas swarmed in the neighboring mountains, it should have been the first care of a vigilant and prudent commander to insure that a strict watch was kept, and that a strict communication should be kept up between the convent and the town, as upon those precautions it was evident that the safety of at least one half of his men must depend, in case of sudden attack by a powerful body of guerillas. These measures of prudence were, however, neglected by our colonel, and the catastrophe I am about to describe was the consequence.

It was my lot to be of the party who occupied the town, and I was consigned to the care of an old lady, who inhabited a tolerably commodious house situated in a street in the rear of the *place d'armes*. My hostess was terribly put out at first, being a thorough hater of the French invaders, and had flattered herself that for this time, at any rate, she had escaped having any of the detested race forced on her hospitality. I was not surprised, therefore, that she received me with ill-concealed vexation, and with a scowl on her dark and withered face.

Nothing daunted, however, by the welcome I received, I at once set to work to soften the feelings of my hostess towards me; and I succeeded so well in my endeavor to ingratiate myself with her, that I was very soon not only tolerated, but liked. I performed my part so well, that at last I was looked on as an exception to the rule, according to the Spanish peasantry of that day, that Frenchmen were barbarians to be hated always, and to be killed when safe occasion offered; and I soon found the wisdom of the line of conduct I had adopted. I treated her with respect, and gave as little trouble as possible; and she, on her side, treated me more as a friend, than as a lodger forced on her against her will by the necessities of war.

Meanwhile, my professional duties occupied me but little. Indeed, had it not been for the occasional alarm caused by rumors of the approach of large bodies of guerrillas, those of my companions who were in less attractive quarters than myself would have had nothing to relieve them from the attacks of *ennui*, and to give them a taste of that excitement so necessary to the contentment, and almost to the existence, of every true Frenchman. Gradually, however, even this source of distraction and amusement became less and less frequent. "Wolf!" had been cried so often to no purpose, that, unless on very authentic grounds and on more than ordinarily positive information, little notice was taken of such rumors. They ceased even to amuse. The effect, too, of these false alarms was to make our colonel relax even the very insufficient precautions he had for a time taken against a surprise; and our watchful enemies, who doubtless had eyes and ears for everything that passed in the town and convent, were not long in taking advantage of our ill-grounded confidence.

One morning, when off guard, and therefore in my own quarters, I was roused from a deep sleep by the rattling of drums. The first tap must have set me dreaming, for I was once more a conscript about commencing my first lessons in the *art militaire*, when loud shouts and discharges of musketry fairly awakened me, and told me that something important had happened. Jumping out of bed, I had just hurried on some clothes, when my old hostess rushed into my room, exclaiming, with a superabundance of gesticulation:

"Ah! Señor Teodoro, Señor Teodoro, you are lost, you are lost! These guerrillas have surprised the town with a large force. All communication between your compatriots and the convent is completely cut off. The French, caught like rats in a trap, and taken wholly unawares, are at the mercy of my enraged countrymen, who are murdering them in heaps."

All this, and much more, the good dame poured forth with wonderful volubility and immense energy, all the while crossing herself most vigorously. Then hastily whipping a little ivory crucifix, such as is usually worn by superstitious devotees in Spain, out of the bosom of her dress, she detached it from the ribbon by which it was suspended, set it on end on the dressing-table, and, falling on her knees before it, began, rosary in hand, to mutter *aves* and *paters* as fast as she could gabble. While she was vainly appealing to all the saints of her calendar in my behalf, I had opened the casement, and cautiously looked down into the street, anxiously endeavoring to ascertain the exact state of affairs.

I have remarked that the house I occupied was situated in a back street, at a short distance in the rear of the *place d'armes*, and therefore, although the tumult was evidently spreading, and becoming more serious every moment, I had a few brief instants for consideration of the course which it would be most prudent for me to pursue. From the volleys of musketry—a sort of platoon firing—which now began to be heard at exceedingly short intervals, I could discover but too plainly what sort of work was going on in the neighboring square. The guerillas were evidently shooting, in cold blood, the French as fast as they could collect them, and it was clear that all hope of resistance was gone. As it was quite impossible for me to join any of my countrymen, in order to organize a defence, I was free to take any steps I pleased for my personal safety. But what could I do? To fly, was impossible; to remain many minutes where I was, certain death. My only chance seemed to be to secrete myself about the premises, until the enemy either retired of their own accord, or should be beaten off by our friends from the convent. But, again, where could I conceal myself so as to escape the strict search which the guerrillas would be almost sure to make for me? Interrupting my hostess, I explained my desire of getting into some place of concealment, and in fact confided myself to her hands. She, it appeared, had already decided on what was best to be done, and now, bidding me follow her, promised to lead me to a place of shelter. I obeyed, of course, without reply—for I had no reason to distrust my guide—and, having no fixed plan of my own, was glad enough to adopt the first that offered itself. To be sure, as she hurried me down the stairs, the thought crossed my mind that she might, after all, be leading me into the lion's den, and that she was, perhaps, going to betray instead of save me; but any misgivings of this kind were soon proved to be without foundation. Without a word passing between us, we reached the court-yard at the back of the house, and there my protectress acquainted me with the project she had formed for my safety. At the back of this yard had been heaped up a huge pile of fagots, and it was behind these that I was to be secreted. The idea seemed a good one: so, setting to work, I very quickly removed enough of them to make a sort of cave, in which I might pass some hours without too much discomfort. Creeping into this hole, the old lady repiled the fagots I had removed as neatly as possible, and she had but just finished her task when a furious battering at the street door, with an accompaniment of threats because it was not opened immediately, proclaimed the arrival of the enemy.

The mistress of the house, herself opened the door, and with admirable *sang-froid* inquired their pleasure. Scarcely waiting to give her a reply, they rushed into the house, and proceeded to ransack the apartment which I had occupied. Uttering terrible threats against my landlady, if they should find that she had harbored one of the hated race, and intimating that they would ere long return and make stricter search, they at last hastily left the house, not willing at that moment to lose time in searching for a single Frenchman, when so many of my countrymen could be slaughtered without that trouble, and feeling satisfied that I could not ultimately escape from the village without their knowledge.

The fellows had gone very systematically to work. They had entirely surrounded the place, so that no path was left open for escape before any alarm was given; and, having been furnished by their friends in the town with an accurate list of all the houses wherein the French were quartered, they succeeded in cutting them off in detail, and preventing any of them from reaching the open country. Rejoiced enough was I to hear them depart. Hope, which had been well-nigh extinguished, again revived, and I was endeavoring to persuade myself that even if the guerrillas were to return and institute a regular search for me, which was but too probable, my retreat would afford me a good chance of safety, when a serio-comic incident convinced me that I could put not trust in the wood-pile as a place of concealment.

My hostess had a pet dog, which I had always treated with the greatest attention, and in return was favored with a great deal of its affection. As it happened, the poor animal came into the court-yard just as the guerillas left, and, getting on my trail, soon traced me to the pile of wood. Having by two or three long sniffs fully satisfied himself that his friend was really there, he began tearing at the bundles of wood, yelping all the while, and apparently determined to get at me. It was rather hard that, in return for all the fondlings and feedings I had lavished on him, he should betray me to my enemies. To get out of my hiding-place to him was impossible; so there was no help for it but to endeavor to coax or scold him into silence. But I alternately wheedled and threatened in vain. On hearing my voice, he stopped scratching and yelping for a brief moment, but soon set to work more vigorously than ever, and seemed determined not to listen to either threats or entreaties. He tore, he barked, he howled, he whined, until I fairly perspired with mingled fear and vexation; and I was at last worked up to such a pitch of uneasiness, that I was on the point of forcing down the wood in front of me, in order to silence my injudicious friend, when my hostess once more came to the rescue, and, seeing how matters stood, without a moment's delay carried my well-meaning persecutor out of the way.

On the return of my hostess to the spot, she now prayed me to come out, as she had thought of a safer place in which to secrete me. The adventure of the dog clearly proved that the security afforded me by the wood-pile was very inadequate, and I therefore gladly consented to a change of quarters.

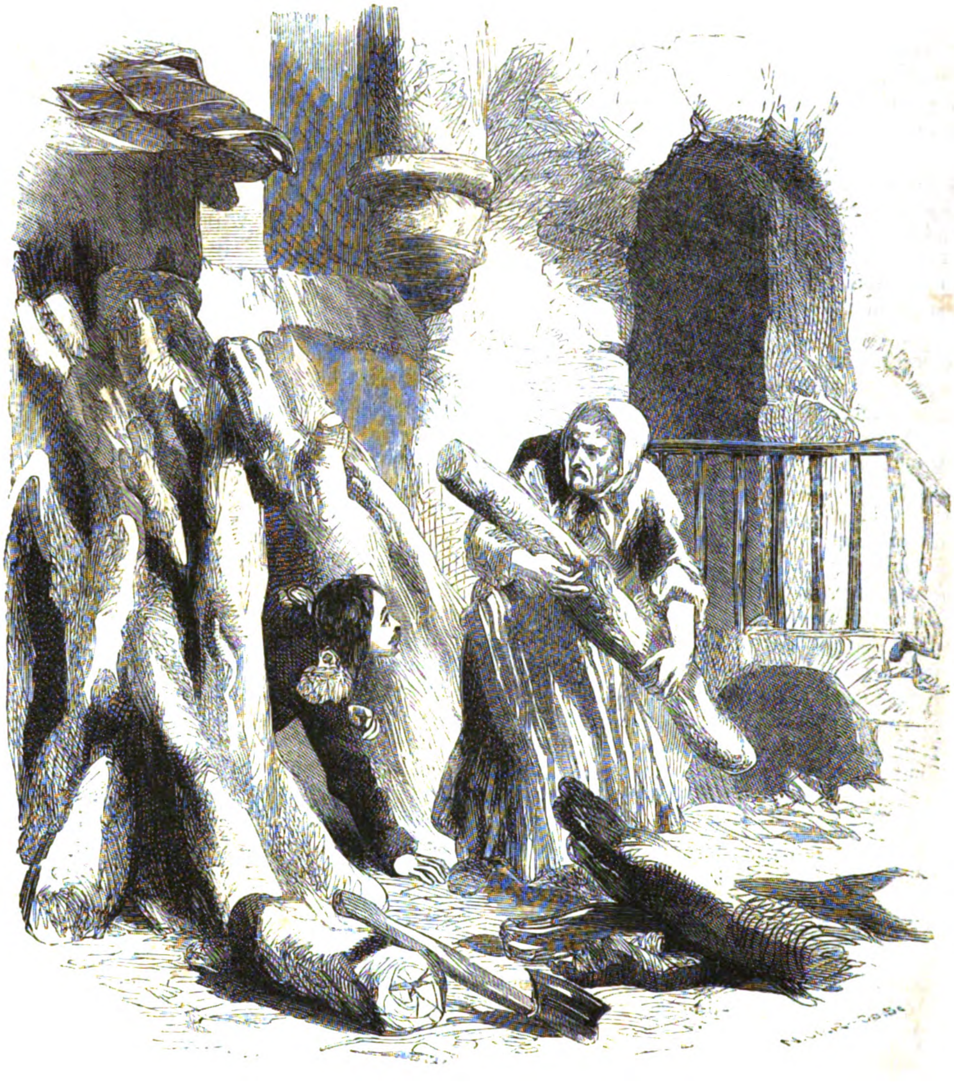
From the back entrance to the house, a long covered passage led to the bottom of the yard, and about midway in this passage was a rather deep well. My hostess now proposed that I should descend in the bucket, as the guerrillas would hardly think of looking for me in such a place; and even if they should, the passage was so ill lighted, that at a depth of some fifty or sixty feet I should most likely escape observation. The plan was an excellent one, and I at once prepared to put it in execution. I was soon let gently down to the surface of the water. We had at first agreed that I should thrust a foot into each side of the crumbling walls of the well, and so, supporting myself the best way I could, allow the bucket to be drawn up, in order to avoid the suspicion which might be created by leaving it in so unusual a position. But to do this I found to be quite impossible. I could by no means dispense with the rope. The well was so wide that, without a support in the middle, I should inevitably leave go my hold and be drowned. A remedy, however, was soon suggested. By the side of the wood-pile in the yard there were several long poles; and, if the water should not prove too deep, it was evident that I could use one of them in place of the rope. With a long piece of cord a pole was sent down, and to my great joy I found that about four feet of it remained out of the water. I was thus enabled to do without the rope; and, the bucket having been drawn up by my kind friends, I was left to make myself as comfortable as possible. They could do nothing more for me; and so, vainly recommending me to the protection of their favorite saints, they betook themselves to another part of the premises.

It was by this time broad daylight, and the guerrillas were eagerly searching for those unhappy Frenchmen who, like me, had sought safety in concealment, when they found both flight and resistance impossible. At short intervals a discharge of musketry, followed by loud *vivas*, told me that the hunters had been successful, and showed me, in the most unmistakable manner, what sort of treatment I had to expect at their hands if I should have the calamity to be discovered. I fully expected that the enemy would return immediately; and not the least painful part of the trial I had to endure was the apprehension that the next minute would put the sufficiency of my hiding-place to the test. The posture, too, in which I was obliged to remain was exhausting in the extreme. With my legs at least four feet apart, and my toes thrust into crevices in the sides of the well, I leaned the whole weight of my body on the pole; and so, without any possibility of resting myself by even the most trifling change of position, I awaited the issue of events. Two hours had already passed, and I was really beginning to fear that my strength would give way, when my landlady, who had kept away all this time because a party of guerrillas were searching the neighboring houses, appeared suddenly at the mouth of the well.

"Señor Teodoro," said she, in that sort of frightened whisper which one hears as distinctly as words spoken in a voice of thunder—"Señor Teodoro, I have brought you some bread and a flask of wine, as I am sure you must need refreshment."

I was about to thank her warmly for the welcome viands, when she interrupted me with—

"Waste no time in thanks, but recruit your strength, which will yet be sorely tried." She then lowered the bread and wine by means of the cord which had served to lower the pole, and, having done so, again withdrew, not, however, until she had replied to my anxious questions as to the position of affairs. I learned from her that the guerrillas had been very successful in hunting out my compatriots, and that the band as yet saw no reason to be believe that they should be disquieted by the party from the convent. I had but just finished my loaf, and taken a draught from the wine-flask, when, without a moment's warning, a party of some thirty or forty guerrillas came rushing down the passage into the yard. It appeared that now, having pretty well finished the bloody work they had undertaken, they had returned with the determination of making a more rigorous search for me. They immediately dispersed themselves over the house, not forgetting to assure my hostess that they would, if they found that she had concealed me, wreak their vengeance on her.



And now commenced a systematic hunt, in the course of which every part of the house was thoroughly examined. Meantime those of the party who had been left in the yard were not idle. No place was left unexplored where it was possible for a man to lie concealed, and of course the wood-pile was thoroughly overhauled. Indeed, if I had remained behind it, as I at first intended, discovery would have been inevitable; for the guerrillas, not trusting entirely to their eyes, thrust their swords in between the bundles of wood, in a fashion which would have compelled me to allow myself to be killed where I was, or to come out and throw myself on their mercy. While all this was going on just over my head, I could hear every word that was uttered, almost as plainly as if I had been in the midst of them. Fear is a wonderful quickener of the senses; and my ears were so stimulated, as it were, by my intense anxiety to discover exactly what was passing, that I lost not a word or a sound, and I could tell exactly what was going on, as well as if I had seen every movement. Soon, however, to my great relief, the search seemed to have been completed, and with inexpressible satisfaction I heard the word given for their departure. I was already beginning to draw breath more freely, hoping that the peril had really passed, when the mouth of the well was darkened by the head and shoulders of a guerrilla, who was peering into the depths of my place of refuge. Although I knew by actual experience that the eye could not penetrate so low, yet my blood seemed to rush back on my heart at the sight, and, literally, I dared not breathe, lest the slightest sound should betray me.

For a few seconds, which to me were hours of agonizing suspense, the Spaniard strove to penetrate the deep shadow of the well, and then, remarking that he would make assurance doubly sure, he seized a large stone which lay near, and dashed it into the opening. I saw the missile lifted high above his head. I could remark even the compressed lip, the deep inspiration, and the knitted brow—and then, as I involuntarily closed my eyes, and commended myself to God, the stone, with a tremendous splash, fell into the water at my feet. But, although I escaped with life, I did not escape without injury. In its descent, the missile just grazed my temple, inflicting a long, but happily superficial wound. I had nerve enough, however, not to cry out, and, what was of equal importance, strength of body enough not to give way under this additional trial of my powers of physical endurance. For a moment I feared that I must have dropped, for my brain swam, and a deadly faintness seized me; but the pain of my wound prevented me from losing consciousness, and I was roused to fresh exertion by hearing the last of the guerrillas depart. I then ventured to move, and, making a fresh appeal to my wine-flask, prepared myself to remain, if necessary, some time longer in my painful position. Happily, I was not put to the trial. Relief was close at hand. My comrades from the convent had now turned the tables on the Spaniards. It was now the turn of the guerrillas to be hunted down and shot in cold blood; and so enraged were the French, that they were with difficulty restrained from wreaking their vengeance, not only on the guerrillas, but also on the townsfolk, who were accused of having connived at, if they had not actually assisted in, the attack. My protectress, therefore, was not at all sorry to have so good a voucher as to the friendly part she had played in the affair, as was afforded her by my presence; and I have the satisfaction of knowing that I thus repaid, in some small degree, the devotedness with which she had served me. Not that I could either say or do anything to protect her from the insults and violence to which her countrymen were exposed; for the intense excitement I had undergone, coupled with the bodily exhaustion consequent on so many hours of painful exertion, now that the danger was over, proved too much for me, and nature fairly gave way. On being hauled up, I swooned in the arms of my deliveress, and the good lady had to tell her own story. As for me, I was roused from one fainting fit only to fall into another; and when I recovered entire consciousness, many days after, I found myself prostrate from an attack of brain fever—the not unnatural concomitant of all that I had undergone. I had been carried insensible to the convent, and it was long ere I could crawl from it to the town. When I did so, my first visit of course was to my kind hostess. Alas! the house had been closed some days, and its mistress, Don Pedro, and his daughter, had gone none could tell me where. But I had little time for vain regrets. I was soon well enough to set out for my regiment, which, during my sickness, had been sent on active service.

TIME.

WRITTEN AT THE CONCLUSION OF A YEAR.

God's sand-glass has been shaken—Lo! there falls,
Upon the distressed, upturned brow of Earth,
Another of the year-grains. It is thus
Time's sands increase—how imperceptibly—
Grain upon grain—till with their desert arms
They gather in the empires; and enclose,
In their long desolate wastes, all that is grand
And beautiful—all cities where the kings
Build for renown—for Time must—weary thought!—
Ever destroy—vain man must ever build.
  As traversing a Libyan waste, the stream,
Nursed in the secret caverns of far hills,
Sinks by degrees into the hungry sands,
Till from the traveller's sight it disappears;
So in Time's hungrier Saharas sink
The streams of human life—they disappear
Even while we gaze upon them. Are they lost
Irrevocably in the aridness
Of the increasing ages? Nay! for lo,
With weary feet emerging from the sand,
The traveller, joy-inspired, beneath the cool
Of roofing palms descries the plenteous spring,
And knows it is the river he had lost,
There, in that Eden of the wilderness,
Strangely restored! Upon the odorous grass
Seated, he muses on that river far
Away for ever sinking—on that spring—
Its purer life—for ever rising near!
"We are that river—we will be that spring,"
He cries: "life in the desert of the years
May disappear, but in fair gardened realms,
Familiar to the tread of angel feet,
Celestial watchers view it welling up
In purity, cleansed by Death's filtering."

THE FIRESIDES OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET

ADVENTURES OF LONG AND CASEY.

Major Benjamin Long was a native of Union District, South Carolina. He belonged to the rifle sharpshooters, who were in advance, and commenced the attack, upon the approach of the British to the Cowpens. His narration of the part he took in that affair, was confirmed by the scars his face exhibited. Posted behind a tree, he took fair aim at a dragoon in full charge. The dragoon saw the levelled rifle, and heard the click of the lock; and supposing the discharge had followed, he shrunk from the expected ball, unharmed—for the weapon had snapped—and the next instant came up to Long, who, with his rifle "clubbed," had stepped from behind the tree. Intending to knock the dragoon off his horse, he struck at him; the blow was parried, and returned with a sabre cut above the assailant's eye; this was followed quickly by a back-handed stroke on the neck and face, which came with such effect, that the young rifleman fell prostrate on the ground. As the dragoon charged over his body, he plunged his sword into it, and spurred on, leaving his enemy apparently dead. Long, however, recovered, and served under Breman and Thomas to the close of the Revolution. Such incidents of personal adventure among those whose names are not mentioned in history, illustrate the social life of the period; for the experience of one was that of many who did not follow the war-like profession.

Levi Casey was an active partisan officer, and a general in the Revolutionary War. Many instances of his courage and presence of mind, are related by those who heard their fathers speak of him. On one occasion, riding alone, as he turned an angle in the road, he saw a large body of loyalists approaching, and close in front. The meeting was wholly unexpected on both sides. Without a moment's hesitation, Casey drew his sword and sprang forward, exclaiming—"Come on, boys!" Then, checking his charge, he turned his horse round, and galloped back the way he came, as if to bring on his men. The feint was successful. The hostile party halted to prepare for the expected rencontre, and before they were aware of the deception, Casey was in safety.

He was celebrated for his mercy to prisoners. A fact memorable on this account was mentioned while he was a candidate for a seat in Congress. His principles had been coarsely assailed by a man named Hogg. Meeting this man afterwards, in the presence of a number of persons, he said, "These arms"—extending his arms—"covered and protected you from the swords of my men, when, during the Revolutionary War, you were found in a suspected place. From you I expected gratitude, therefore, not abuse; but I was wrong; from a *hog*, I ought to expect no more than a grunt."

THE LINDSEY FAMILY.

The Lindsey Family, belonging to the patriotic side, were actively engaged in partisan affairs during the War, in Newberry and Laurens Districts. Three of the men, with others under Water's command, carried off and saved the field-piece at the Battle of Stono. Colonel John Lindsey commanded the scout in which they all served. He was a good officer, and an honorable man. Others of the name could not refrain from "spoiling the Amalekites," as the Tories were often called; and in their burning zeal for the service, now and then they swept through the Quaker settlements on Bush River, and carried off much plunder from the pacific inhabitants. A homely juvenile marauder, among the rest, on one of these occasions, had assisted in plundering Daniel Richardson's house, and with other things had carried off a raccoon-skin belonging to an idiot named Jake. Some time afterwards, young Lindsey happened to visit the place again, and saw Jake standing at the door of the house. The idiot suffered the party to pass him quietly, till it came to the turn of the spoiler of his racooon-skin; him he seized by the throat, and hurled him back, exclaiming, "Stand back—stand back—ugly boy! love 'coon-skin too much!"

THE AVENGERS OF BLOOD.

Absalom Turner was a young lad of a loyalist family in South Carolina, and had taken no part in the struggle of the times; his only offence was being the brother of Ned and Dick Turner, two of the bloodiest bravoes of the notorious band called "the Bloody Scout," commanded by Cunningham. The house of Mrs. Turner, the boy's mother, was a rendezvous for the Tories. It stood in the bend of Saluda River. Absalom fell a victim to the crimes of his relations; he was killed by a party of savage Whigs, and not content with the slaughter of one who had never injured them, they resolved on a wanton piece of cruelty, in revenge for outrages committed on their friends.

From original papers, written out from personal recollections, by the Hon. Judge O'Neall, of South Carolina, and furnished by him for Mrs. Ellet's work.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the U. S., for the Southern District of New York.

They immediately proceeded to the house of Mrs. Turner, forced an entrance, and turning down the sheets of her bed, wiped upon them their gory swords. "This blood"—the murderers shouted in her ears—"is the blood of your young son!" and with fierce exultation at the mother's grief and horror, they left her to her search for the lad's mangled body.

The news of this sacrifice quickly reached the two brothers who served with Cunningham, and they vowed a fearful vow of bloody vengeance. With one associate, they set out, as on one of their midnight excursions for plunder, and marched from the Saluda River to Indian Creek. There, surprising the little settlement in the midst of peaceful slumber, they burst into the unprotected houses, dragged four Whig lads from their beds and from the presence of their mothers, heedless of shrieks and entreaties for mercy, and rushing with these prisoners into the forest, put them to death by hewing them in pieces with their swords, amid their piercing cries and supplications. This brutal retaliation was in its turn revenged; one of the murderers being afterwards killed by kinsmen of the victims.

The thirst of blood was not yet slaked in the brothers Turner, after this horrible deed. In one house they found Stokely Towles—a man whom they knew for an active patriot—prostrated with the small-pox. Not even the fear of contact with this loathsome disease could turn them from their fell purpose. They dragged him from the hole into which he had crept for concealment, and inhumanly butchered him. Could the imagination of a writer of romance picture scenes more terrible or revolting! We give the simple outline of truth, without a tint of coloring; the reader will not be at a loss to fill out the sketch.

The fate of the violent and bloody man is foretold. One of the actors in this tragedy—Dick Turner—was captured by stratagem, not far from his mother's residence. He was brought before the commanding officer of the party. "Tell me," said the officer, "where are your comrades?"

The prisoner made no reply.

"Tell me!" shouted the other, "tell—or——" and he presented a loaded pistol at Turner's breast—"I will shoot you!"

"Shoot, and be d—d!" was the answer of the fearless ruffian. The officer pulled the trigger, and the robber and murderer fell expiring at his feet.

His brother, Ned, remained in Cunningham's corps through the War, and after its close, was placed, with his associates, under the ban of the State. They were proclaimed outlaws by the governor, and a reward was offered for every man of them, dead or alive. The remaining members of this notorious band fled for refuge to the vast swamps, and the thickets on the banks of Saluda, Bush, and Little Rivers. In these wild fastnesses, impenetrable save to those who knew how to trace the labyrinths, they remained concealed; were called "outliers," and were the terror of the honest and industrious families of the settlements.

Search for them, however, was not given up by those who had suffered from this ferocious gang, and the hunted outlaws were driven from place to place and found no rest. Turner left his familiar haunts in the woods and swamps, and took his departure for Florida. His mother lived to a great age, and was respected in the neighborhood, for the guilt of her sons was not imputed to her. After her death, in 1810, Ned ventured back—a worn and aged man—to pay a visit to his kindred in South Carolina, and receive some share of his mother's estate.

The sons of Stokely Towles were soon informed that their father's cruel murderer was walking free and unharmed among the scenes of his former violence and crime. "Blood for blood," was the cry of nature within them. They raised a party, resolute as themselves for vengeance; and marching at night, surrounded the house of Turner's niece, in which he was then staying as a guest.

Colonel Towles, pistol in hand, took his position at the door. The old man within was soon made aware, by some means, that his enemies had surrounded him, and were determined to visit upon him a fearful retribution. His ancient fire and cunning revived with the pressure of danger, Seizing his clothes, he dressed himself hastily, and stood in readiness; and the instant the door was thrown open, he sprang through it like lightning. Colonel Towles, however, was quick and bold, and prepared for accidents. He fired as the old ruffian dashed past him; Ned Turner staggered forward a few steps, and fell in the yard, apparently lifeless.

The ball had entered his neck. John Towles looked at the body; the man seemed to have breathed his last, but he was not certain, and he called out to his brother to "shoot the old rascal again." But the colonel refused, and forbade any of the others to do it; it was a shame, he said, to shoot a dead foe. The party quitted the place immediately.

Presently, the mistress of the house walked slowly into the yard, to search for the body of her slaughtered uncle. She was weeping loudly, and invoking vengeance on those who had slain him. Her cries and lamentations were interrupted by a faint sound from the corner of the fence. The victim had crawled there to hide himself. As the startled woman ran to the spot, she was greeted by the words, uttered in a distinct and strong voice:

"Don't be a fool! Bring me my horse. Old Ned *ain't* dead yet!"

The horse was speedily brought. The old man meanwhile had arisen, and walked into the house. The bullet had inflicted only a flesh wound, and that an inconsiderable one. He lost no time in preparing to mount his horse, and commence his homeward journey; for he had good reason to fear pursuit from his enemies, should they learn that he was not killed. He reached his home in safety, and there died, having attained a great age.

The adventures of Ned Turner would afford material for a novel; and the close of his career inculcates a moral as striking as that illustrated by any fiction.

THE OUTLIER AND HANNAH GAUNT.

HUBBS was one of Turner's companions, and an associate in the band of Cunningham; he also became an "outlier" after the War. One of his excursions, in which he had the company of Ned and another comrade, was for the purpose of robbing a sturdy old man —one Israel Gaunt—who lived in the manner of the Quakers, and used their language, though not one of their society. Hubbs proposed an attack on his house, having heard that money was kept there.

Israel Gaunt was a man of gigantic frame, of great strength, and indomitable courage. His house and kitchen, as was usual in the dwellings of the Quakers, were under the same roof. It was a comfortable abode, and rather inviting, in the view of the marauding "outliers."

Some time after sunset, three men, who appeared to be travellers, rode up to the door, and requested lodging for the night. It was refused; the aspect of the visitors being not prepossessing enough to overcome the fear of strangers, natural enough among women in these troublous times. Hubbs then rode up close to the kitchen door, in which Mrs. Gaunt was standing, and asked her for a mug of water.

As the matron turned back to get the water, Hubbs, who had dismounted, sprang into the kitchen after her. She handed the water to him, and at the same moment discovered the arms he wore concealed in his dress. She instantly communicated the fact to her husband, who lost no time in closing and securing the doors.

Finding himself thus cut off from his companions, and in peril of capture, the outlaw drew his pistol, with an oath, and presented it at the breast of Gaunt. At that instant Hannah Gaunt, the old man's daughter —a young woman possessed of the powerful frame and unflinching courage of her father, sprang suddenly forward, and threw up the pistol; its contents entered the ceiling, and she closed in a desperate struggle with the intruder.

Hannah succeeded in throwing Hubbs on the floor, where she held him with an iron gripe, notwithstanding his violent struggles to release himself, and his plunging his spurs again and again into her dress and her limbs. While the Amazonian damsel thus pinned him down, her father snapped two loaded muskets at his head; but both missing fire, he "clubbed" the last, and with it beat his foe till the stock was broken into fragments, and the barrel bent; then seizing a stone of fourteen pounds' weight, dashed it at his head.

The party outside made a few unsuccessful attempts to force the doors, and, ruffianlike, unwilling to meet an armed man in full encounter, fired through the window and wounded the brave old man; breaking his arm and sending a ball into his side. Another ball grazed the temple of the heroic girl. The wounds Gaunt had received rendered him powerless, and supposing the outlaws intended to break into the house and murder him, he yielded to the entreaties of his wife and daughter, to lose not a moment in getting out of their reach. He succeeded in escaping unobserved from the rear of the house, and made his way to the barn, where he concealed himself.

Hubbs was not killed, though when the stone struck him the blood had spouted up to the low ceiling. He scrambled to his feet in the confusion of Gaunt's escape, and leaped on a table under a window, through which he jumped or fell into the yard, striking upon his head in the descent. His associates carried him off. He recovered, and was, some time afterwards, hanged in Georgia. Gaunt recovered from his wounds, and in after years often spoke with astonishment of the hardness of the outlaw's head. "It was a violent hard head," he used to say; "as hard as any ram's head."

ASSOCIATE OUTLIERS.

One of Hubbs's associates, and another outlier, who also had served under Cunningham, was called Moultrie. On one occasion four of this gang determined on going to rob the house of Andrew Lee, who lived at Lee's Ferry, on the Saluda. Lee had several powerful dogs, that were his protectors at night; and to provide against any sudden emergency, he had given arms to his negro men.

The party came to the house, and Moultrie, by some means, managed to effect an entrance. He found himself seized and grappled with by the strong arms of Lee; they struggled desperately, and fell together upon a bed. Lee had the mastery, and held his enemy down, while he cried to his wife to take the axe and knock the robber on the head. The trembling woman obeyed; but in her agitation, aiming the first blow, it fell upon the hand of her husband.

He shrieked with pain, but did not relax his hold; the woman repeated the blow with more judgment and effect; the pole of the axe was driven into the outlaw's head, breaking his skull; and Lee always maintained that a portion of the brains flew out, and stuck to the headboard of the bedstead.

He threw Moultrie on the floor, supposing him dead, sprang to his feet, called his negroes, and with them and his dogs, rushed upon the other marauders. They fled from the conflict, and Lee nearly succeeded in capturing Ned Turner.

On his return from the chase he found Moultrie alive; and before day he had so far recovered his strength that his captor found it necessary to bind him. He was taken to Ninety-six, tried, condemned and hanged. It was stated that his skull was so badly fractured, "it moved up and down with every breath he drew."

Hall Foster, one of the outlaws who went on this expedition, was the beau of the outliers. While running every day for his life, and skulking at night in the forest, he wooed and won the affections of a nymph of the woods, and married her. His career was closed by a long aim, and possibly a random ball.

Foster sometimes presented himself at the house of Colonel Cleary, on account of old acquaintance. The colonel had figured as a loyalist at the battle of Musgrove's Mills, but after the peace, deporting himself as an honest man, he was allowed to return quietly to his plantation on the Saluda; his "delusion" being pitied and forgiven.

At one time a patriot named Isaac Norrell was an inmate of Oleary's house, and ill with fever and ague. Foster heard that his old comrade had given shelter to this man, was very angry at it, and announced his resolution of riding up to the house to give Norrell "a cursing"—taking it for granted that the invalid was not able to harm him or defend himself. Norrell, however, who had heard of his intention, was able that day to walk about, and was prepared for his enemy with a good rifle.

Oleary managed to send word to Foster of the danger he would incur by approaching his house. The ruffian had no desire to encounter an armed adversary, and accordingly halted, when about a hundred and fifty yards from the house, and began curvetting his horse, by way of showing his reckless courage. Norrell had warily observed his movements from a corner of the fence, where he laid hid. He seated himself deliberately, while the robber dandy was wheeling and curvetting, and with a rifleman's rest took a rifleman's aim! He fired: the ball entered Foster's head between the eyes; he fell to the ground, and his charger fled without a rider! After lingering in pain a few hours, this favorite companion of Cunningham through peril and bloodshed, ceased to be numbered among the sons of men.

Jesse Grey was the last of the outliers, and his life was often in danger from the rifles of pursuers. Careless of peril, and confident in the speed and strength of his gallant horse, he would often throw himself in their way, on purpose to show them, according to the slang of the day—"a clear pair of heels." The establishment of peace and good order at length drove him from his wild forest haunts. He went to Nova Scotia, and it was ascertained, to the astonishment of all who heard of it, that he there actually lived and died an honest man!

A WALLACHIAN TRAGEDY.

People appear to live at Bucharest solely to amuse themselves, and in this respect it reminded us very much of Paris. The day begins with promenades and music in the delightful gardens belonging to the town, where an excellent band seems to be always playing, and where the Wallachian ladies love to exhibit the freshness of their foreign toilettes, and to dazzle with their native charms. The latter are by no means to be despised, and we should recommend armor of proof to any susceptible young gentleman who takes his airing in the afternoon through the fashionable resorts of Bucharest. The artillery brought into position is truly formidable—eyes of sparkling black, or, more dangerous still, the deepest and softest blue; masses of dark waving hair; rich, deep-toned complexions, and magnificent Juno-like forms, are ready to rout him utterly at a moment's notice. True, he has the option of surrendering at discretion; and to do these Latin ladies justice, they treat their prisoners with considerable clemency and kindness. All day long goes on fiddling, and flirting, and mischief-making, and then people dine and go to the Opera, and come to the gardens again; and the same agreeable but not very edifying process is practised far into the night. And this sort of thing, only changing the scene with the variations of the climate, week after week, month after month, and year after year. No wonder society is pretty well demoralised at Bucharest; no wonder the Wallachian boyards are sunk overhead in debt and steeped in profligacy. Pleasure is indeed a pleasant thing, but its effects are always the same, when it is made the chief business of life.

"Do you see that lady talking with such vivacity to those three gentlemen under the tree?" asked a very agreeable acquaintance as we were strolling through the gardens towards sunset, smoking a cigar, and listening to a divine melody of Strauss, played gloriously well by an Austrian band. "Would you like to hear a romance in real life? would you like to know what a little devil she is? Come and sit down in the shade, order a couple of ices, and I will tell you all about her. Look at her now," continued our friend, one of those men whom one meets so often in foreign society, who seem to know everybody's business and everybody's secrets, "Look at her now, with her large black eyes, and her raven hair, and her pretty features, sunken a little with late hours and excitement, but still *mignonne*, and charming to a degree. Not another woman in the gardens could wear that simple white dress and little white bonnet, relieved only by a red ribbon, and yet look so brilliant as she does! What a coquette it is! How she smiles and shows her pretty teeth, and waves that little white hand. There is blood upon it, though. Yes, *mon cher*, as surely as if she herself had pointed the weapon. I have known her from a girl; she is not so *very* young now, but some women never get old; she has plenty of mischief before her yet. *Sappramento!* I like her, too—she is such a thorough-going vixen! One of those men is her husband, *mon cher;* she makes love to him when there is nobody else by, or when she wishes to pique some of his friends. 'Marguerite,' I said to her one day, scarcely two years ago, 'do you wish all mankind to be at your feet? Is your vanity so insatiable? Will you not spare poor Adolphe, and be content with *one* brother? Fritz is your devoted slave. He is the elder, do what you will with *him*, but let the poor boy off for my sake; he is my friend. Marguerite, I know him thoroughly—you will break his heart.'

"She drew her slight figure up, and looked as wicked as she *alone* can look, whilst she replied—'No, no; a thousand times, *no*. I will put my foot on his neck—I *will* humble him. He said Baronne B—— was handsomer and cleverer than me, did he? Baronne B——, that great foolish blonde. I will teach him to know me; and then let him break his heart, if he *will* be such a fool. Come to me to-morrow; I will show you how I manage him, you are all alike, you men.'

"I put Adolphe on his guard; I reasoned with him, and warned him. *Sapristie*, we must help each other; such women are the natural foes of our kind. But it was of no use; Adolphe would not believe a word I said to him. She had given him a rosebud and one of her gloves, and he was mad about them. *Que voulez-vous?* the boy loved her—as a man loves only once—with all his heart and soul; not like you and me, *mon cher*, who are men of the world, but like a fool. Of course, if I couldn't save him, it was no use distressing myself about the affair. These things must take their course. I went with him to her house, and I watched her as one watches a cat playing with a mouse. Poor boy! I saw in two seconds it was all over with him, and that he was that woman's slave. How cleverly she did it; first greeting him kindly, then talking about his brother —his rival, mark you, and a devilish handsome one, too—and so making him thoroughly angry and half wild; and lastly, pressing his hand at parting, and asking, with a glance at me (as if she hadn't begged me herself to come), 'why she never could see him alone?' The boy's Hungarian blood couldn't stand it; if Marguerite had told him to lie down and die at her feet, he would have been fool enough to obey her, and she would have laughed at him afterwards. As we walked away, he raved about her to me. His features writhed when he mentioned her name; it was quite a study. But, to tell the truth, I had rather it had been any one than Adolphe. So the affair went on, and she played one brother against the other, till they were both mad with jealousy, and the younger was capable of anything—*anything*. It was an ugly business, my friend, I was present when they quarrelled, not about *her*, but a foolish dispute at cards. Blows passed; they were mad; they *must* have been mad. A challenge was given and accepted. Will you believe it, they went out to fight! these two brothers that had clung to the same mother's breast. We managed the affair quietly; we drew the ball from each of their pistols. Judge of their fury, especially of that of Adolphe, when the fraud was discovered. Was I not right? I respect the laws of arms; I have been 'on the ground' myself more than once; but brothers, you see, *mon cher, c'était un peu trop fort*. More and worse would have happened, but I entreated Marguerite to interfere. Would to God I had let it alone! Forgive me—would I had brought my handsome Adolphe home shot through the heart—'*kismet*' says our neighbor the Turk. I sometimes think there *is* such a thing as destiny. How she managed Fritz I know not. He was a cool, resolute fellow, and fond as he was of her, not a man that any woman on earth could make a fool of; of course, she liked him the better of the two. But Adolphe—I know how she made Adolphe give his word of honor that he would never lift his hand against his brother's life—she made it the condition of her love; she told Adolphe she would be his—and his alone. The boy was wild with happiness; he was young, as I have already told you, my friend, and a sad fool. He raved about her all the evening; I was very tired of him, I assure you, by bedtime. He walked all night under her windows—it was fortunate he could not see inside—and next day she was driving out with Fritz, and distant as ever with my very ridiculous young friend. So she played brother against brother, and made each believe the other was the only obstacle to his own happiness; but more especially she delighted in her triumph over poor Adolphe, and, as she had vowed that she would do, when I remonstrated with her, she did indeed put her foot on the boy's neck. This could not go on. The brothers would have fought a hundred times, but for the word of honor they had passed. The Hungarian never forfeits his word. They were of the old Hungarian *noblesse*; rich, handsome, gallant, and devoted. Must such men be sacrificed to a woman's momentary triumph? Must the noblest, truest heart break because a little devil in muslin chooses to play the fool? It is no business of yours and mine. *Our* hearts don't break quite so easily, and I, for one, never allow love-making to interfere with dinner; but Adolphe and his brother were *très peu philosophes*, and, would you believe it, in their madness they threw the dice to decide which of the two should commit suicide. It must have been a ghastly main, and although she *does* look very pretty this evening, with the light of the setting sun behind her, I think you will agree with me that the stake was hardly worth the hazard. I never knew of it till after all was over. It appears that the loser was to have a year's grace by consent, and during that year to be unmolested in his love by his rival. I remarked that Adolphe rushed suddenly into the deepest extravagance, and appeared, what they call at Paris, to '*manger*' his fortune very rapidly, also to have rid himself completely of his rival, but this I thought was owing to the superior good sense or greater caprice of the elder brother. I wonder whether he ever told Marguerite? I sometimes think that she knew it all the time. For the first few months I verily believe Adolppe congratulated himself on his success. For one year of her society he was content to barter life—and more than life, too, perhaps—but as time drew on, I remarked his cheek grow paler, and his brow more haggard day by day. Moreover, even then she could not resist the pleasure of making him unhappy. I tell you, my friend, that woman has no more heart than a stone. One morning I knew it all. Adolphe had spent his last florin, and blown his brains out. He left a letter for me, and I learnt everything. He kept his word, you see, and behaved quite like a gentleman. They found her glove on his body. Fritz never came back. I do not think she minded that very much. It is scarcely six months ago: do you think she looks very sorrowful now? Bah! my friend: let us smoke one more cigar, and then go to the Opera."

THINGS WE TALK ABOUT.

—Shakspeare has always been pursued by a pack of commentators, who have fastened upon him with hound-like tenacity and fierceness. Profound, indeed, must be the oblivion of the grave, if Shakspeare rests in peace. There isn't a learned man anywhere, that doesn't want to throw a stone at him; there isn't a vain man, or an ambitious one, that doesn't try to send his name floating down the stream of time with that of his. Some, even, audaciously attempt to go before, and show him the way to immortality. Some play the usher, and pit their own importance against that of his. To associate one's name with that of Shakspeare is an epidemic among a certain class. There is an itch, which might be known as the Shakspearean itch. Some want to hang their learning upon him—to sport in foot-notes, and amble along on the same page with the mighty one; others to slip their names along with his, by a Boswell sort of legerdemain. Think of going down to posterity in this wise: "Blair's Shakspeare," just as a certain reverend succeeded, by a dextrous trick, in slipping before, and bowing Gibbon down the ages as "Milman's Gibbon."

But, indeed, we had hoped that the race of Shakspearean commentators was extinct. Not so, however. They spring up day by day. They come thickly, even now. If they keep on, they will eventually smother the Poet altogether. He already staggers under the mass of litter they accumulate upon him. It would crush out of being any other man. The tenacity and patience of his enemies, make up for their insignificance. Ant-like, they move mountains by infinitesimals, and may succeed even yet in "making Ossa like a wart." Centuries hence some industrious antiquarian will disembowel him to an astonished world, from the mountain of rubbish under which he now threatens to disappear.

A new edition of Shakspeare, with a new annotator, has just appeared in London, which outdoes all that has gone before. The annotator is the most sanguinary and mendacious we ever read. He is so determined to thrust himself into the attention of the reader, that, at the slightest provocation, or with none at all, he slips before the text and flaps his fool's cap in your eyes. He can hardly let a line escape without putting his teeth in it. If there's nothing to explain, he explains all the same. He hangs vast stores of learning upon a preposition. If he wants to say anything, he is never at a loss for an excuse. He touches the most insignificant word, and out there flows a stream of erudition, in which he disports exultingly. We are stopped at "proper man," to be told that it means, "a tall, comely, or well-proportioned man;" "imperious," is annotated as "commanding, stately;" "our fast intent," is gravely explained to mean, "our determined resolution; "to let," is to "hinder;" "flourish," is "ornament;" and so on through the whole work. In the passage from the lines on Dover Cliff,

> "I'll look no more
> Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
> Topple down headlong,"

we are stopped to be told that "*topple*," means "*tumble*." The familiar line:

> "I am nothing, if not critical,"

is explained: "critical, *i. e.*, censorious or cynical." In Othello's touching speech:

> "Had it pleased Heaven to try me with affliction,"

where he exclaims:

> "There where I have garner'd up my heart;
> Where either I must live, or bear no life;
> The fountain from which my current runs,
> Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!"

we are gravely informed that "garner'd up," means "treasured up."

In those tremendous lines which Constance heaps with such bitter vehemence upon Austria:

> "Thou slave, thou wretch, thou coward;
> Thou little valiant, great in villainy;
> Thou ever strong upon the stronger side;
> * * * * *
> * * * * *
> Thou wear a lion's hide! Doff it for shame,
> And hang a calf's skin on those recreant limbs,"

we are absolutely referred to a note at the foot of the page, which, with unexampled and incredible simplicity, *explains* this passage thus:

"Constance means to call him a *coward;* she tells him that the skin of the lion's prey would suit his recreant limbs better than that of a lion."

We could multiply instances of Mr. Singer's astute editorship, like these, through pages. We will content ourself with one more example:

> "In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
> But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
> Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
> What damned error but some sober brow
> Will bless it, and approve it with a text?"

One would suppose that the "meanest capacity" could comprehend this passage; not so believed the editor. He takes pains to tell us that "gracious," means "pleasing, winning favor," and that "approve" is in the sense of to "justify it."

The book is called, "The Works of William Shakspeare, with Notes, by S. W. Singer." This is very modest. Mr. Singer might have reversed it, and said, "Essays of S. W. Singer, with Notes, by William Shakspeare." That would have been giving precedence where Mr. Singer evidently thinks precedence is due. We certainly expect to see some commentator follow out this idea yet—take for himself the body of the page, and give the foot to Shakspeare.

— "Oil Paintings, with Rich Gilt Frames," is the sign that obtrudes upon the attention of the Broadway promenader, not a thousand yards from the St. Nicholas. The vender is a shrewd fellow. He knows how to put the attractive side foremost. It is not the wretched canvas which is to tempt the buyer—the *Rich Gilt Frames* are the inducement. People want ornaments for their walls. A showy frame is just the thing, and if a painting is incidentally thrown in, why well and good. And such outbursts of ornament and elaboration as some of these same frames are! They dazzle with their gorgeousness, and no doubt, utterly captivate the many who lack "the delicate sense." As for the paintings that are attached to them, heaven save the mark! one needs to see them in order to thoroughly comprehend how poor such attempts can really be. In the collection we have in view, there are copies of Cole's Voyage of Life, that outrage the original; copies of Landseer's paintings that would disgrace an honest fire to be kindled with them. A short time since, a portrait of Washington was exhibited in the window, so utterly bad, that if there were any patriotism left, it would have been mobbed within two hours after its exposure. The perpetrator ought to be dipped in his own paint-pots. We say *paint-pots* deliberately, because he must be a sign-painter. And yet, after all, we may be slandering an honorable trade.

We protest against the thing altogether. If frame makers need some extraneous temptation to induce the purchase of their showy wares, let them try other means, and not degrade art to their tricks. Why not, indeed, make the frames solid at once? What is the use of filling them in with appendages of ochre, brick-dust, and the like, when, if constructed in one mass, they would give scope for the genius of the gilder, and adorn patrician walls in a degree of magnificence hitherto unreached. Think of it, Messrs. Gilders.

— To those numerous gentlemen, who, during this autumn, have been so heart-rendingly anxious about the fate of the country, we suggest for consideration the wise conclusion arrived at by Old Hardcastle, in Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer:"

> "*Hastings*. So, then, you have no turn for politics, I find.
>
> *Hardcastle*. Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, when I fretted myself about the mistakes of the government, like other people; but, finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself."

— It is a little singular that four of the most distinguished novelists of England at the present time (if we except Bulwer), are named Charles — Charles Dickens, Charles Reade, Charles Kingsley, and Charles Lever.

— In the old periodical from which we gave some extracts last month, we find the following anecdote of General Wayne, which we do not recollect meeting before:

"*Bon repos* is the French cant for *good night*. Washington drank it for a signal to break up; for the moment the company had swallowed the General's *bon repos*, it was take hats and retire. Gen. Wayne, who understood fighting much better than French, had some how or other mistaken this *bon repos* for the name of some great warrior of times of old. Upon one occasion he invited a number of hearty fellow-officers to dine with him, and help him to drink to the health of America a few dozen bottles of old wines, which, by unusual good luck had fallen into his possession. As soon as the cloth was removed, and the bottles on the table, the hero of Stony-Point cried out; "Come, gentlemen, fill your glasses—here's old *bon repos* for ever!" The officers were struck with astonishment, and, having turned off their glasses, rose up, one and all, to go.

"'Heyday! what's all this, gentlemen, what's all this?'

"'Why, did you not drink *bon repos*, or good night?'

"'What! is that the meaning of it?'

"'Yes.'

"'Well, then, a fig for *bon repos*, and take your seats again; for by the life of Washington, you shall not stir a peg, till we have started every drop of our drink.'"

The following amusing and poetical description of Broadway, we also clip from the same publication:

"Crowds of beaux and swarms of ladies,
Who of frost nor cold afraid is;
Merchants, of all sorts and sizes,
On speculative enterprises,
Seeking fortunes—*wives with money*—
In this land of milk and honey—
Jostling, riding, sleighing, walking,
Up and down, for ever talking,
Frenchman, Ça Ira! keep moving,
Pushing forward, driving, shoving—
German, Irish, Dutch and Russian,
Sulky John Bull 'midst th' confusion:
Super-cargo clerks by dozens,
Fathers, mothers, sisters, cousins—
All in bustling league together,
Minding neither wind nor weather,
Sleighs with thousand bells a-tinkling,
Pacing the town o'er in a twinkling—
Bays and greys, and blacks, so dashing,
Four in hand through Broadway splashing;
Citizens, and Jews so wealthy,
Purblind beaux, and belles so healthy—
Forming parties—news retailing,
Making bargains—war bewailing—
Talking politics and scandal,
Taking New-Orleans by the handle.
Lounging and sauntering, so delightful,
Some so handsome, some so frightful—
Of every sort, of every nation,
Throughout this great and wide creation.
To what I know not to compare it,
To nought resembling, I declare it,
From your idea to what may strike it,
But this is Broadway!!! How d'ye like it?"

—Among the many devices for social entertainment, such as charade parties, amateur theatricals, etc., tableaux parties have in the last two seasons grown to be a very common and popular means of parlor amusement. We have been present upon several such affairs, and recently was an auditor where an unusual degree of excellence and spirit was manifested. The first tableau of the evening had been suggested by the design of "Flowers and Thorns," by Mr. Dallas, published in our August number. The scene opened first upon a picture of luxury and elegance—a lady reclining upon a sofa, richly dressed, watching a little girl in silks and laces, at her feet, holding up her hands to catch a bunch of grapes held temptingly above her by a negro servant, who stood behind her mistress' sofa, with a huge basket of fruit and flowers. Two little boys played upon the carpet, with flowers, toys, and books scattered carelessly and in profusion around them. Various accessories heightened the effect of elegance and luxury. The scene closed, and in two minutes the doors opened upon another—its contrast. A woman and child in squalor and rags, sat upon the floor. By their side stood a man in rags and wretchedness. A bent form, white, famine-sunken cheeks, hollow eyes—with a look and attitude of utter despair and misery. Such opposite phases of life startle the thinking mind daily, but not often have we seen the contrast so vivid—not often has it come home to us so forcibly.

Other tableaux followed. Among them was a series representing the story of "The Minstrel's Curse," suggested by Müller's marble group. The story or legend, our readers will recollect, is this: an old, grey-headed minstrel and his youthful son appear before a king and his queen. The young minstrel is a noble, beautiful lad. The king in jealous and fierce. The queen rewards the youthful troubadour for his ballads, with a rose taken from her bosom. The king, in an outburst of rage, strikes the youth dead at his feet. The old minstrel gathers up the dead body of his son, and in the fierce majesty of a despairing, frenzied heart, hurls a terrible curse at the murderer—so terrible, that even the savage monarch shrinks and cowers before it. This story was depicted in a series of five groupings—dramatically arranged, and strikingly effective.

Entertainments of this kind, which require art, taste, and dramatic feeling, are an agreeable variety to the orthodox dancing party—and as some of our readers may desire a few hints as to the mode of getting them up, we subjoin a brief direction or two:

In parlors which communicate by folding doors, use one room for the auditors, the other for the tableaux. Stretch a piece of thin gauze between the rooms. Line the tableaux-room with some dark stuff—black muslin or the like. Some erect a platform—but it is not necessary. Concentrate a very brilliant light upon the tableaux room, and arrange the light in the auditorial room so that it can be turned nearly out during the representation. Dresses, with little tact, can be manufactured at home. These are all the preparations that are necessary. Some dramatic feeling, and sense of the picturesque, will be requisite for any great degree of success. Well-known scenes in familiar plays or poems, afford good subjects, but where a complete story can be represented by a succession of pictures, the interest and pleasure is enhanced. Humoreus incidents can be introduced very happily.

— At the fair, last month, notwithstanding large inducements were offered to induce ladies to exhibit on horseback, only *one* female made her appearance, and that one under an assumed name. We are glad to see that the sex is getting ashamed of these unfeminine exhibitions, at least in the neighborhood of the metropolis, and we trust that this shrinking from the gross notoriety of a race-course, will spread into the rural districts. If we are to have female jockeys, the thing will soon run into fast horses, and females driving four in hand, till, in the end, America may yet have female gamesters expert as those of Badin, or Aix la Chapelle, or lady pugilists practising in the ring, *à la* Tom Hyer.

Let us have no more of these unlady-like exhibitions. Die Vernon certainly was a charming romp, and Lady Gay Spanker something of a character, but neither of them we fancy, were intended to set young ladies crazy to exhibit their skill and pretty faces to the miscellaneous rabble of a race-course. Imagine a woman having her baby christened out of the plate won by herself at a riding-match, or a man of sense falling in love with a young girl, as she dashes by him in the ring, pell-mell against a rival, with her foot in the stirrup and her whip in the air.

Thank heaven, ladies in this vicinity prefer to take their equestrian exercises after a more approved fashion.

— And so, the princess royal is on the highway to matrimony, and a German husband.

The bridal arrangements are going on with spirit at Berlin, and attract so much attention that hundreds are actually going from London to witness them. "There are six rooms filled with silks, satins, ribands, velvet, costly laces, artificial flowers, exquisite embroideries in gold and silver, bonnets, caps, gowns, gloves, body and table linen, diamonds and jewelry, shawls, mantles, and toilet requirements of every description, color, and material. Thirty persons have been engaged several months on the embroidery, and one hundred and twenty needle-women have worked on the different articles."

There's a wedding for you. Six rooms full of exquisite finery, and all for a pretty little girl of sixteen. But how does it happen that all these preparations are at Berlin and not in London? Is it royal etiquette for the husband's family to supply the *trousseau*. We, who know so little of courts, are at a loss about the matter.

A Yankee girl, now, takes her bridal garments and outfit from the old homestead, and proudly disdains all aid in these matters from the masculine side of the contract. But then, New England is not Old England, to say nothing of Berlin, and, of course, all this is right, and according to the strictest court usage, or our haughty neighbors across the water would never permit a satin slipper, or a yard of lace to come within fifty miles of Victoria's charming daughter.

Now, considering these hard times, when weddings and funerals are so expensive, that nothing but millionaires can afford to marry or die—we should like to have this royal fashion introduced here. It would save anxious mammas a world of trouble, and let our young men down pleasantly from politics to satins, velvets and wreaths of white roses. By all means, this is a fashion worth transplanting.

—It is very gratifying to see that Shakspearean revivals, at our theatres, properly put forward, are almost always successful. The senior Wallack has been giving us such revivals, marked with unusual care in appointments and cast, and in the way of scenery, quite superior to anything we have had since Kean's King John. He opened in Hamlet, and played it six nights to full houses. It was very beautifully put upon the stage. The last scene of the first act, was as fine a scenic effort as we can recall. The respective parts of the play were carefully rendered. Mr. Wallack never has been as successful in Shakspearean parts, as in others of a more melo-dramatic and showy character. He made his Hamlet much as might have been expected. It was declamatory, strongly marked, statuesque, picturesque, scholarly read; and he looked the part a great deal better than we have any right to expect from a man considerably over sixty. But it was *not* philosophical, nor contemplative; there was very little of the melancholy, the "river of the eye," the sad, softness which we look for in the meditative prince.

Mr. Wallack's Benedick is one of the most popular and successful of his renditions. Of course, he could not play an engagement without it; and, upon this occasion, its production was enhanced in interest by the *début* of a young lady of high social rank in this city, who appeared as Hero. It was a successful first appearance. There was, of course, agitation, tremor, and a very evident fluttering—but there were, nevertheless, decided indications of talent. We heard the lady read previously to an assembly of friends and critics. She has beauty, cultivation, intelligence, the breeding of a lady, the enthusiasm of an artist, and willingness to study hard. Moreover, she starts in the right direction. She goes on the stage, and *talks* as Christian men and women talk, with a very wholesome abhorrence of stagy stalking, and conventional mouthing. We submit if this last recommendation ought not of itself make her welcome to all sensible people.

This little theatre, now under Mr. Stewart, sustains the reputation it attained when exclusively under the control of Mr. Wallack. Laura Keene's soon opens, and so the Broadway—then comes the tug of war. But we have faith in Mr. Stewart. We do not believe that he will be found behind his rivals in any essential requisite; and nowhere can such a company be gathered together, as nightly holds forth at this theatre. But, will Mr. Stewart give us some new plays?

LITERARY.

—*Bothwell: a Poem. By W. Edmondstoune Aytoun.* Professor Aytoun is the editor (or reputed editor) of Blackwood. The critical articles which have appeared in that periodical have been attributed to him. He has always been a severe satirist of what he calls the "Spasmodic School" of poetry. He never conceded to Alexander Smith the poetical rank claimed for him. He burlesqued his poem, and was mercilessly severe upon him and all of his school. Of course, the appearance of Bothwell is an excellent opportunity for a little tit for tat. The Titan, an Edinburgh monthly, in the interest of Alexander, charges in full tilt against it. "A poem should certainly contain poetry; here we have found none," says the Titan; and elsewhere: "We should not have known it was a poem, if the author had not so informed us on the title page;" further on: "The music seldom rises beyond the most ordinary common metre ever droned through the nose of a Ranter." These are only a few of the stones which the Titan hurls at the professor. Others of the critics take up the bludgeon in the same way —and still others range by the side of the poet, and defend him lustily. It is a very pretty battle as it stands.

Our own impression of Bothwell is highly favorable. It is of the Scott and "Marmion" school—a brilliant poem, with no affectation, no mannerism—with passages of terse, graphic, picturesque reality, fluent and simple in style, and, as a whole, in its completeness, perfect unity, and sustained dramatic power, really fascinating. The poem is in the form of a monologue. Bothwell in his dungeon in the fortress of Malmoe, pours forth his story—that strange, wild, turbulent story, which so outdoes romance or invention. The narrative is so contrived as to include all the most salient events in the career of Mary, but siding always with that unhappy queen. We recommend its perusal to our readers. Some may refuse its claims as a poem—none can deny its profound interest as a splendid historical chronicle. (Ticknor & Fields.)

A Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah, by Lieutenant Burton, of the English army, is one of the most remarkable and interesting books of travel published during the century. Lieutenant Burton is the only "infidel" with the exception of Burckhardt, who has penetrated to the shrine of Mohammedanism; and, inasmuch as severe sickness prevented Burckhardt from observing minutely all the mysteries of the jealously guarded cities, this work is almost an exploration into an unknown field. Lieutenant Burton's journey was singular and romantic. A long residence in India, features somewhat Eastern in their character, and a thorough acquaintance with various Persian and Arabian dialects, fitted him of all others for the dangerous task. Disguised as a travelling Dervish, he performed the journey safely—the difficulties of which can scarcely be appreciated, even by his reader. Discovery would have been his destruction. He required to be perpetually on his guard, and punctiliously to observe the thousand rites and observances of the true Mohammedan; observances and ceremonies so intricate and various, as to be with difficulty learned and comprehended even by those to the "manner born." The relation of the journey is clear, graphic, and agreeable; and the insight it affords into the inner temple of Mohammedanism, complete and satisfactory. The American edition contains an introduction by Bayard Taylor. (G. P. Putnam & Co.)

—*Daisy's Necklace: and What Came of It*, by T. B. Aldrich, is not worthy the genius of the author. Mr. Aldrich is a fine poet. Some of his pieces which travel about among the newspapers, evince exquisite fancy, great delicacy, and remarkable felicity of touch. The fame he is sure to acquire as a poet, will make him ashamed of this volume before he is many years older. It is not without its good things; it has some sharp satire and pleasant humor—but, as a whole, it is simply foolish. The plot is extravagant and forced. Its best scenes remind the reader of others already known to fiction. It has no reality, no earnestness. People won't sympathize with characters when the author plays his antics behind them, and lets his readers into the secret that he don't believe in them himself. Mr. Aldrich says he was tempted by the seductive argument of a cheque. Don't let him yield again. His fame is of too much promise to be trifled with. (Derby & Jackson.)

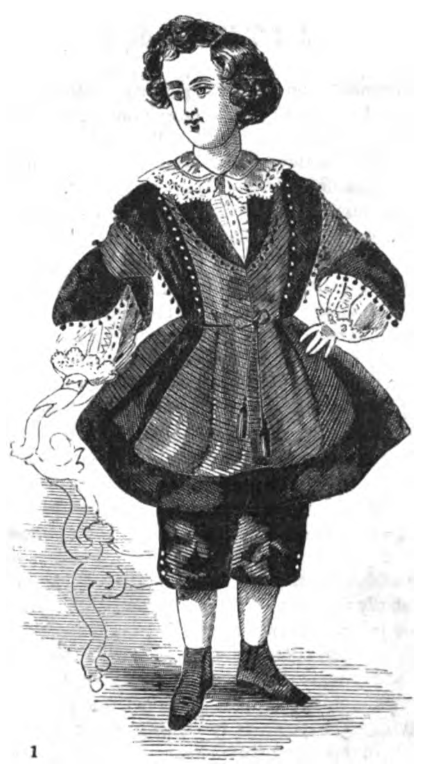
OUR FASHION DEPARTMENT.

In presenting our readers with a fashion department, which it is our intention to give each month, we obey a popular demand rather than our own tastes, which, we must confess, would confine these things to works devoted exclusively to the toilet. But our readers want the fashions, and so long as we have the power, our readers shall have exactly what they want.

In order to make the department perfect, we have engaged our designs from Frank Leslie, whose corps of engravers are picked from the best artists of the country, and whose Gazette of the Fashions is confessedly the most complete authority in the world for every department of the toilet. Every engraving that he supplies to us, is taken from the original garment, selected by the editor of the *New Monthly* from the ware-rooms in which it is invented, and, in order to render our selections still more reliable, the authority for each article will always be found in direct connection with its illustration.

Having been the editor of "Leslie's Gazette" for several years, we are, from assured experience, enabled to select those authorities best adapted to the wants of our lady readers, and, if we must have fashion plates, they shall be fresh from the most approved establishments, and the best which art can produce — in the original article of costume, the letter-press, and the engravings.

The season has been so bland, and the leaf fall has so pro-

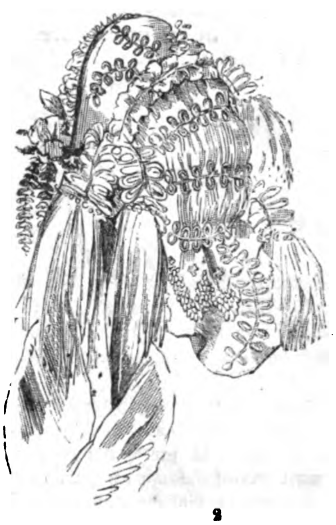


1

Little Boy's Dress, from Genin's, 513 Broadway.

tracted itself so pleasantly into the cold months, that we can scarcely speak of winter fashions as a thing that exists, except in the near future. But we have a brilliant foreshadowing of what is to come in fancy straws enriched with velvet, and brilliant with chinelle, jet, and gorgeous autumn flowers. Dresses are still deeply flounced, and the basquines are getting deeper and deeper, till we anticipate them ending in the double jupe of olden times, looped up from a skirt of some other color; a pretty costume, which we should not regret to see introduced. Meantime, we have seen some very lovely out-door toilets, which we will content ourselves with describing, till the season for opera and ball-dresses arrives.

One suited for the carriage-drive consists of silk in broad stripes, alternately white and violet. The violet stripes, which are of a beautiful bright tint, are watered, and the white stripes are figured with large bouquets of pink daisies with foliage. The skirt of this dress has no trimming. The corsage, which is made high, and with a basque, is trimmed with a revers pelerine of black lace, round at the back, and meeting in a point in front of the waist. At the edge of the basque, there is a row of black lace, six or seven inches deep, headed with passementerie of an open pattern, and about an inch in width. The sleeves are composed of one large puff of silk and a frill of lace, the latter surmounted by a row of passementerie. The undersleeves are of Venetian point in two large puffs, and a mousquetaire collar of Venetian point will be worn with the dress. The collar is fastened by a bow of black lace with long ends; a small jewelled brooch being fixed in the centre of the bow.

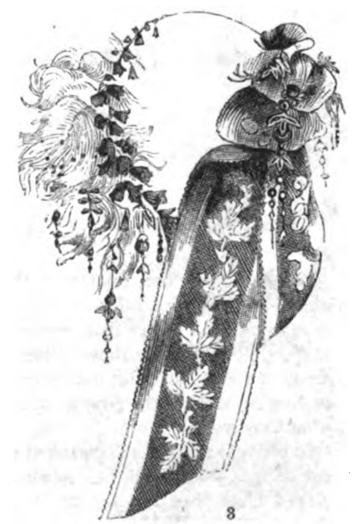


2

Bonnet, from Mrs. Cripps, 513 Canal St.

No. 1 is a costume for a little boy. The material of the coat is blue watered poplin; the waist is made high in the neck, with an open front, ornamented by lapelles of black velvet, terminating in a polka at the back; in front the velvet extends down the entire length of the skirt in a graduated piece. The edges of the lapelles, and polka, are decorated by a succession of blue plush balls, suspended by silken cords. The bias skirt is half a yard in length. A border of black velvet, two inches wide, surrounds the edge. The flowing sleeves are ornamented by a turn-up cuff of black velvet, forming a point on the top, and underneath the arm (each point) is confined by a blue plush ball. The under-skirt is of fine linen, the bosom formed of a double frill of needlework, arranged on a band of insertion; the neck is finished with a round collar, edged with a needle-work frill. The sleeves are full, and gathered into a cuff of insertion, terminated by a needle-work frill. A heavy blue cord and tassels encircle the waist. The pants are of black velvet, descending a little below the knee. Three small gilt buttons adorn each side.

No. 2 is a superb bridal bonnet, so vapory, diversified, and charming as to render it almost indescribable. The foundation is white satin, covered with puffed tulle, and banded with light feather trimming, woven on a piping of white satin. A delicate feather trimming, arranged in the form of leaves, bands the front and descends over the curtain, which is composed of lace, edged an inch deep with a slight puffing of silk covered with tulle and headed by a piping of white satin. The sides are enriched by clusters of fancy French feathers, delicate and white as snow flakes. The face-trimmings consist of a full cap of blonde, mingled with clusters of white hyacinths on the right side. On the left are clusters



3

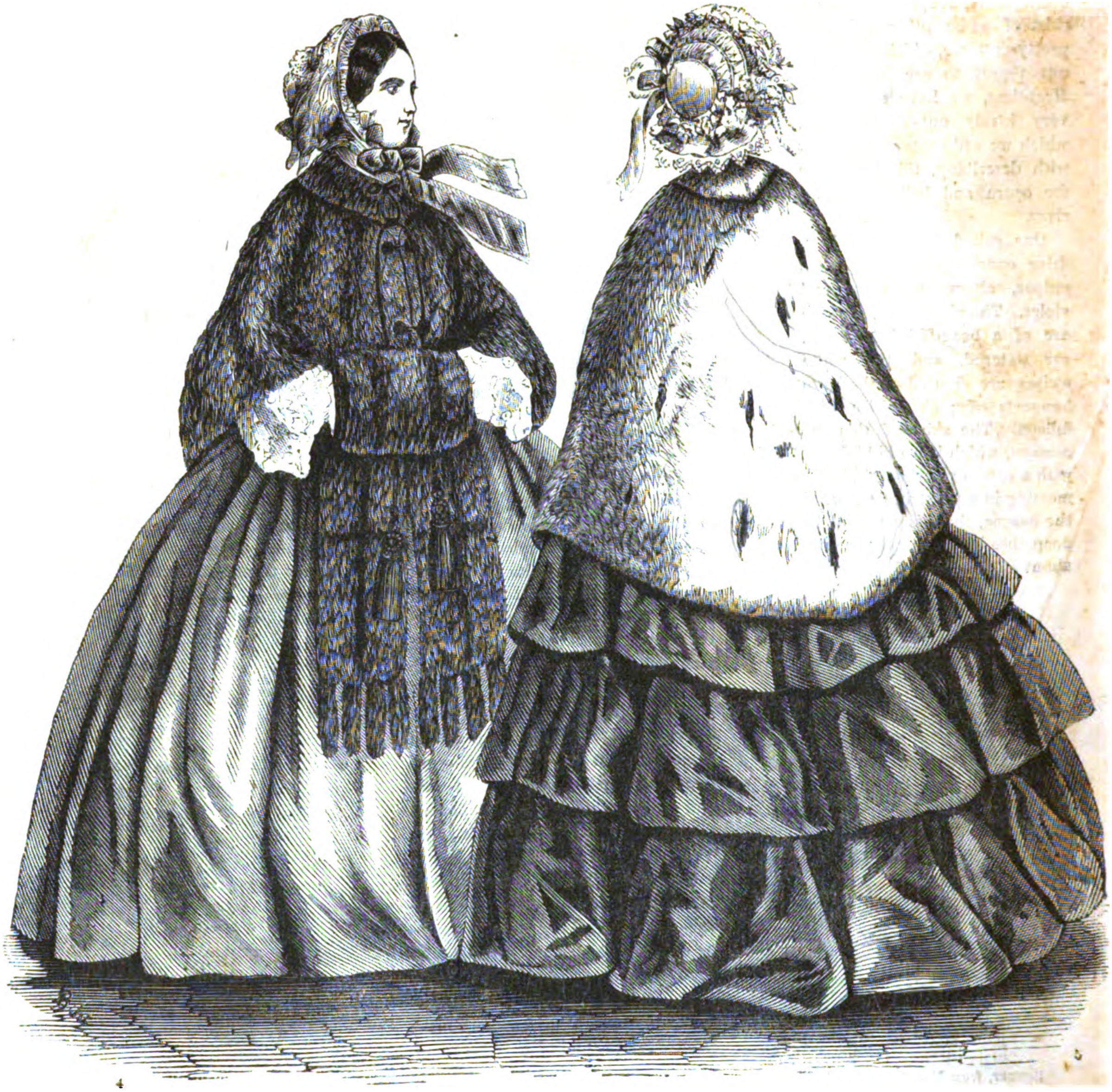
Head-Dress, from Genin's, 513 Broadway.

of white moss rose-buds and forget-me-nots. Broad strings of white ribbon, edged with satin.

No. 3 is a superb style of head-dress. It is arranged on a spring foundation of black lace. On the right are two full loops and streamers of broad blue ribbon, brocaded with a rich pattern of flowers, veined with silver and mingled with a profusion of silver flowers falling among the loops. The left side is adorned by full clusters of white ostrich plumes.

No. 4 is a mantilla of mink fur, which is especially adapted to the promenade, where dark furs are always the most desirable. It is quite large and the form is beautiful. It is slightly rounded in the back, and descends considerably below the line of the waist; the fronts descend in long square tabs of glossy fur, made from the choicest skins; a medium-sized collar, round in the back and pointed in front, forms a finish to the neck: the front is closed with plain satin buttons, and ornamented by a heavy cord and round tassels of twisted brown silk.

No. 5 is a talma of royal ermine, or, to use its proper name, a Siberian ermine, the most beautiful of all furs for the opera. The one we illustrate is truly magnificent. Its snowy purity is enhanced by its black pendants, surrounded by a faint golden tinge; at the back, it is nearly a yard in depth, the fronts corresponding in length, and forming slight points; the neck is finished with a medium-sized collar of the same form, fastened to the garment by a heavy silken cord, terminated by rich flat tassels of white silk; the lining is of glossy white silk, quilted in a border of flowers.



Minx and Ermine Mantillas, from Backus, Osborne & Co., 51 Maiden Lane.

61 lines = 1 p
6 " = 63 words
1 col = 670

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